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[redacted]

LA SALLE

AND THE

DISCOVERY OF THE GREAT WEST.

FRANCE AND ENGLAND IN NORTH AMERICA.

PART THIRD.

BY

FRANCIS PARKMAN.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. II.

Stanford Library

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SIGNS OF DANGER. — ADOPTION. — HENNEPIN AND HIS INDIAN RELATIVES. — THE HUNTING PARTY. — THE SIOUX CAMP. — FALLS OF ST. ANTHONY. — A VAGABOND FRIAR: HIS ADVENTURES ON THE MISSISSIPPI. — GREYSOLON DU LHUT. — RETURN TO CIVILIZATION.

As Hennepin entered the village, he beheld a sight which caused him to invoke Saint Anthony of Padua. In front of the lodges were certain stakes, to which were attached bundles of straw, intended, as he supposed, for burning him and his friends alive. His concern was redoubled when he saw the condition of the Picard Du Gay, whose hair and face had been painted with divers colors, and whose head was decorated with a tuft of white feathers. In this guise he was entering the village, followed by a

crowd of Sioux, who compelled him to sing and keep time to his own music by rattling a dried gourd containing a number of pebbles. The omens, indeed, were exceedingly threatening; for treatment like this was usually followed by the speedy immolation of the captive. Hennepin ascribes it to the effect of his invocations, that, being led into one of the lodges, among a throng of staring squaws and children, he and his companions were seated on the ground, and presented with large dishes of birch-bark, containing a mess of wild rice boiled with dried whortleberries, — a repast which he declares to have been the best that had fallen to his lot since the day of his captivity.[1]

[1] The Sioux, or Dacotah, as they call themselves, were a numerous people, separated into three great divisions, which were again subdivided into bands. Those among whom Hennepin was a prisoner belonged to the division known as the Issanti, Issanyati, or, as he writes it, *Issati*, of which the principal band was the Meddewakantonwan. The other great divisions, the Yanktons and the Tintonwans, or Tetons, lived west of the Mississippi, extending beyond the Missouri, and ranging as far as the Rocky Mountains. The Issanti cultivated the soil; but the extreme western bands subsisted on the buffalo alone. The former had two kinds of dwelling, — the *teepee*, or skin-lodge, and the bark-lodge. The teepee, which was used by all the Sioux, consists of a covering of dressed buffalo-hide, stretched on a conical stack of poles. The bark-lodge was peculiar to the Eastern Sioux; and examples of it might be seen, until within a few years, among the bands on the St. Peter's. In its general character, it was like the Huron and Iroquois houses, but was inferior in construction. It had a ridge roof, framed of poles, extending from the posts which formed the sides; and the whole was covered with elm-bark. The lodges in the villages to which Hennepin was conducted were probably of this kind.

The name Sioux is an abbreviation of *Nadouessioux*, an Ojibwa

This soothed his fears; but, as he allayed his famished appetite, he listened with anxious interest to the vehement jargon of the chiefs and warriors, who were disputing among themselves to whom the three captives should respectively belong; for it seems that, as far as related to them, the question of distribution had not yet been definitely settled. The debate ended in the assigning of Hennepin to his old enemy Aquipaguetin, who, however, far from persisting in his evil designs, adopted him on the spot as his son. The three companions must now part company. Du Gay, not yet quite reassured of his safety, hastened to confess himself to Hennepin; but Accau proved refractory, and refused the offices of religion, which did not prevent the friar from embracing them both, as he says, with an extreme tenderness. Tired as he was, he was forced to set out with his self-styled father to his village, which was fortunately

word, meaning "enemies." The Ojibwas used it to designate this people, and occasionally also the Iroquois, being at deadly war with both.

Rev. Stephen R. Riggs, for many years a missionary among the Issanti Sioux, says that this division consists of four distinct bands. They ceded all their lands east of the Mississippi to the United States in 1837, and lived on the St. Peter's till driven thence in consequence of the massacres of 1862, 1863. The Yankton Sioux consist of two bands, which are again subdivided. The Assiniboins, or Hohays, are an offshoot from the Yanktons, with whom they are now at war. The Tintonwan, or Teton Sioux, forming the most western division and the largest, comprise seven bands, and are among the bravest and fiercest tenants of the prairie.

The earliest French writers estimate the total number of the Sioux at forty thousand; but this is little better than conjecture. Mr. Riggs, in 1852, placed it at about twenty-five thousand.

not far off. An unpleasant walk of a few miles through woods and marshes brought them to the borders of a sheet of water, apparently Lake Buade, where five of Aquipaguetin's wives received the party in three canoes, and ferried them to an island on which the village stood.

At the entrance of the chief's lodge, Hennepin was met by a decrepit old Indian, withered with age, who offered him the peace-pipe, and placed him on a bear-skin which was spread by the fire. Here, to relieve his fatigue, — for he was well-nigh spent, — a small boy anointed his limbs with the fat of a wild-cat, supposed to be sovereign in these cases by reason of the great agility of that animal. His new father gave him a bark-platter of fish, covered him with a buffalo-robe, and showed him six or seven of his wives, who were thenceforth, he was told, to regard him as a son. The chief's household was numerous; and his allies and relatives formed a considerable clan, of which the missionary found himself an involuntary member. He was scandalized when he saw one of his adopted brothers carrying on his back the bones of a deceased friend, wrapped in the chasuble of brocade which they had taken with other vestments from his box.

Seeing their new relative so enfeebled that he could scarcely stand, the Indians made for him one of their sweating baths,[1] where they immersed him

[1] These baths consist of a small hut, covered closely with buffalo-skins, into which the patient and his friends enter, carefully closing

in steam three times a week, — a process from which he thinks he derived great benefit. His strength gradually returned, in spite of his meagre fare; for there was a dearth of food, and the squaws were less attentive to his wants than to those of their children. They respected him, however, as a person endowed with occult powers, and stood in no little awe of a pocket compass which he had with him, as well as of a small metal pot with feet moulded after the face of a lion. This last seemed in their eyes a "medicine" of the most formidable nature, and they would not touch it without first wrapping it in a beaver-skin. For the rest, Hennepin made himself useful in various ways. He shaved the heads of the children, as was the custom of the tribe; bled certain asthmatic persons, and dosed others with orvietan, the famous panacea of his time, of which he had brought with him a good supply. With respect to his missionary functions, he seems to have given himself little trouble, unless his attempt to make a Sioux vocabulary is to be regarded as preparatory to a future apostleship. "I could gain nothing over them," he says, "in the way of their salvation, by reason of their natural stupidity." Nevertheless, on one occasion, he baptized a sick child, naming it Antoinette in honor of Saint Anthony of Padua. It seemed to revive after the rite, but soon relapsed and presently

every aperture. A pile of heated stones is placed in the middle, and water is poured upon them, raising a dense vapor. They are still (1868) in use among the Sioux and some other tribes.

died, "which," he writes, "gave me great joy and satisfaction." In this he was like the Jesuits, who could find nothing but consolation in the death of a newly baptized infant, since it was thus assured of a paradise which, had it lived, it would probably have forfeited by sharing in the superstitions of its parents.

With respect to Hennepin and his Indian father, there seems to have been little love on either side; but Ouasicoudé, the principal chief of the Sioux of this region, was the fast friend of the three white men. He was angry that they had been robbed, which he had been unable to prevent, as the Sioux had no laws, and their chiefs little power; but he spoke his mind freely, and told Aquipaguetin and the rest, in full council, that they were like a dog who steals a piece of meat from a dish and runs away with it. When Hennepin complained of hunger, the Indians had always promised him that early in the summer he should go with them on a buffalo hunt, and have food in abundance. The time at length came, and the inhabitants of all the neighboring villages prepared for departure. To each band was assigned its special hunting-ground, and he was expected to accompany his Indian father. To this he demurred; for he feared lest Aquipaguetin, angry at the words of the great chief, might take this opportunity to revenge the insult put upon him. He therefore gave out that he expected a party of "Spirits" — that is to say, Frenchmen — to meet him

at the mouth of the Wisconsin, bringing a supply of goods for the Indians; and he declares that La Salle had in fact promised to send traders to that place. Be this as it may, the Indians believed him; and, true or false, the assertion, as will be seen, answered the purpose for which it was made.

The Indians set out in a body to the number of two hundred and fifty warriors, with their women and children. The three Frenchmen, who though in different villages had occasionally met during the two months of their captivity, were all of the party. They descended Rum River, which forms the outlet of Mille Lac, and which is called the St. Francis by Hennepin. None of the Indians had offered to give him passage; and, fearing lest he should be abandoned, he stood on the bank, hailing the passing canoes and begging to be taken in. Accau and Du Gay presently appeared, paddling a small canoe which the Indians had given them; but they would not listen to the missionary's call, and Accau, who had no love for him, cried out that he had paddled him long enough already. Two Indians, however, took pity on him, and brought him to the place of encampment, where Du Gay tried to excuse himself for his conduct; but Accau was sullen, and kept aloof.

After reaching the Mississippi, the whole party encamped together opposite to the mouth of Rum River, pitching their tents of skin, or building their bark-huts, on the slope of a hill by the side of the water. It was a wild scene, this camp of savages

among whom as yet no traders had come and no handiwork of civilization had found its way, — the tall warriors, some nearly naked, some wrapped in buffalo-robes, and some in shirts of dressed deer-skin fringed with hair and embroidered with dyed porcupine quills, war-clubs of stone in their hands, and quivers at their backs filled with stone-headed arrows; the squaws, cutting smoke-dried meat with knives of flint, and boiling it in rude earthen pots of their own making, driving away, meanwhile, with shrill cries, the troops of lean dogs, which disputed the meal with a crew of hungry children. The whole camp, indeed, was threatened with starvation. The three white men could get no food but unripe berries, — from the effects of which Hennepin thinks they might all have died, but for timely doses of his orvietan.

Being tired of the Indians, he became anxious to set out for the Wisconsin to find the party of Frenchmen, real or imaginary, who were to meet him at that place. That he was permitted to do so was due to the influence of the great chief Ouasicoudé, who always befriended him, and who had soundly berated his two companions for refusing him a seat in their canoe. Du Gay wished to go with him; but Accau, who liked the Indian life as much as he disliked Hennepin, preferred to remain with the hunters. A small birch-canoe was given to the two adventurers, together with an earthen pot; and they had also between them a gun, a knife, and a robe of beaver-

skin. Thus equipped, they began their journey, and soon approached the Falls of St. Anthony, so named by Hennepin in honor of the inevitable Saint Anthony of Padua.[1] As they were carrying their canoe by the cataract, they saw five or six Indians, who had gone before, and one of whom had climbed into an oak-tree beside the principal fall, whence in a loud and lamentable voice he was haranguing the spirit of the waters, as a sacrifice to whom he had just hung a robe of beaver-skin among the branches.[2] Their attention was soon engrossed by another object. Looking over the edge of the cliff which overhung the river below the falls, Hennepin saw a snake,

[1] Hennepin's notice of the Falls of St. Anthony, though brief, is sufficiently accurate. He says, in his first edition, that they are forty or fifty feet high, but adds ten feet more in the edition of 1697. In 1821, according to Schoolcraft, the perpendicular fall measured forty feet. Great changes, however, have taken place here, and are still in progress. The rock is a very soft, friable sandstone, overlaid by a stratum of limestone; and it is crumbling with such rapidity under the action of the water that the cataract will soon be little more than a rapid. Other changes equally disastrous, in an artistic point of view, are going on even more quickly. Beside the falls stands a city, which, by an ingenious combination of the Greek and Sioux languages, has received the name of Minneapolis, or City of the Waters, and which in 1867 contained ten thousand inhabitants, two national banks, and an opera-house; while its rival city of St. Anthony, immediately opposite, boasted a gigantic water-cure and a State university. In short, the great natural beauty of the place is utterly spoiled.

[2] Oanktayhee, the principal deity of the Sioux, was supposed to live under these falls, though he manifested himself in the form of a buffalo. It was he who created the earth, like the Algonquin Manabozho, from mud brought to him in the paws of a musk-rat. Carver, in 1766, saw an Indian throw everything he had about him into the cataract as an offering to this deity.

which, as he avers, was six feet long,[1] writhing upward towards the holes of the swallows in the face of the precipice, in order to devour their young. He pointed him out to Du Gay, and they pelted him with stones till he fell into the river, but not before his contortions and the darting of his forked tongue had so affected the Picard's imagination that he was haunted that night with a terrific incubus.

They paddled sixty leagues down the river in the heats of July, and killed no large game but a single deer, the meat of which soon spoiled. Their main resource was the turtles, whose shyness and watchfulness caused them frequent disappointments and many involuntary fasts. They once captured one of more than common size; and, as they were endeavoring to cut off his head, he was near avenging himself by snapping off Hennepin's finger. There was a herd of buffalo in sight on the neighboring prairie; and Du Gay went with his gun in pursuit of them, leaving the turtle in Hennepin's custody. Scarcely was he gone when the friar, raising his eyes, saw that their canoe, which they had left at the edge of the water, had floated out into the current. Hastily turning the turtle on his back, he covered him with his habit of St. Francis, on which, for greater security, he laid a number of stones, and then, being a good swimmer, struck out in pursuit of the canoe,

[1] In the edition of 1683. In that of 1697 he had grown to seven or eight feet. The bank-swallows still make their nests in these cliffs, boring easily into the soft sandstone.

which he at length overtook. Finding that it would overset if he tried to climb into it, he pushed it before him to the shore, and then paddled towards the place, at some distance above, where he had left the turtle. He had no sooner reached it than he heard a strange sound, and beheld a long file of buffalo — bulls, cows, and calves — entering the water not far off, to cross to the western bank. Having no gun, as became his apostolic vocation, he shouted to Du Gay, who presently appeared, running in all haste, and they both paddled in pursuit of the game. Du Gay aimed at a young cow, and shot her in the head. She fell in shallow water near an island, where some of the herd had landed; and being unable to drag her out, they waded into the water and butchered her where she lay. It was forty-eight hours since they had tasted food. Hennepin made a fire, while Du Gay cut up the meat. They feasted so bountifully that they both fell ill, and were forced to remain two days on the island, taking doses of orvietan, before they were able to resume their journey.

Apparently they were not sufficiently versed in woodcraft to smoke the meat of the cow; and the hot sun soon robbed them of it. They had a few fish-hooks, but were not always successful in the use of them. On one occasion, being nearly famished, they set their line, and lay watching it, uttering prayers in turn. Suddenly, there was a great turmoil in the water. Du Gay ran to the line, and, with the help

of Hennepin, drew in two large cat-fish.[1] The eagles, or fish-hawks, now and then dropped a newly caught fish, of which they gladly took possession; and once they found a purveyor in an otter which they saw by the bank, devouring some object of an appearance so wonderful that Du Gay cried out that he had a devil between his paws. They scared him from his prey, which proved to be a spade-fish, or, as Hennepin correctly describes it, a species of sturgeon, with a bony projection from his snout in the shape of a paddle. They broke their fast upon him, undeterred by this eccentric appendage.

If Hennepin had had an eye for scenery, he would have found in these his vagabond rovings wherewith to console himself in some measure for his frequent fasts. The young Mississippi, fresh from its northern springs, unstained as yet by unhallowed union with the riotous Missouri, flowed calmly on its way amid strange and unique beauties, — a wilderness, clothed with velvet grass; forest-shadowed valleys; lofty heights, whose smooth slopes seemed levelled with the scythe; domes and pinnacles, ramparts and ruined towers, the work of no human hand. The canoe of the voyagers, borne on the tranquil current, glided in the shade of gray crags festooned with honeysuckles; by trees mantled with wild grape-vines;

[1] Hennepin speaks of their size with astonishment, and says that the two together would weigh twenty-five pounds. Cat-fish have been taken in the Mississippi, weighing more than a hundred and fifty pounds.

dells bright with the flowers of the white euphorbia, the blue gentian, and the purple balm; and matted forests, where the red squirrels leaped and chattered. They passed the great cliff whence the Indian maiden threw herself in her despair;[1] and Lake Pepin lay before them, slumbering in the July sun, — the far-reaching sheets of sparkling water, the woody slopes, the tower-like crags, the grassy heights basking in sunlight or shadowed by the passing cloud; all the fair outline of its graceful scenery, the finished and polished master-work of Nature. And when at evening they made their bivouac fire and drew up their canoe, while dim, sultry clouds veiled the west, and the flashes of the silent heat-lightning gleamed on the leaden water, they could listen, as they smoked their pipes, to the mournful cry of the whippoorwills and the quavering scream of the owls.

Other thoughts than the study of the picturesque occupied the mind of Hennepin when one day he saw his Indian father, Aquipaguetin, whom he had supposed five hundred miles distant, descending the river with ten warriors in canoes. He was eager to be the first to meet the traders, who, as Hennepin had given out, were to come with their goods to the mouth of the Wisconsin. The two travellers trembled

[1] The "Lover's Leap," or "Maiden's Rock," from which a Sioux girl, Winona, or the "Eldest Born," is said to have thrown herself, in the despair of disappointed affection. The story, which seems founded in truth, will be found, not without embellishments, in Mrs. Eastman's *Legends of the Sioux*.

for the consequences of this encounter; but the chief, after a short colloquy, passed on his way. In three days he returned in ill-humor, having found no traders at the appointed spot. The Picard was absent at the time, looking for game; and Hennepin was sitting under the shade of his blanket, which he had stretched on forked sticks to protect him from the sun, when he saw his adopted father approaching with a threatening look, and a war-club in his hand. He attempted no violence, however, but suffered his wrath to exhale in a severe scolding, after which he resumed his course up the river with his warriors.

If Hennepin, as he avers, really expected a party of traders at the Wisconsin, the course he now took is sufficiently explicable. If he did not expect them, his obvious course was to rejoin Tonty on the Illinois, for which he seems to have had no inclination; or to return to Canada by way of the Wisconsin, — an attempt which involved the risk of starvation, as the two travellers had but ten charges of powder left. Assuming, then, his hope of the traders to have been real, he and Du Gay resolved, in the mean time, to join a large body of Sioux hunters, who, as Aquipaguetin had told them, were on a stream which he calls Bull River, now the Chippeway, entering the Mississippi near Lake Pepin. By so doing, they would gain a supply of food, and save themselves from the danger of encountering parties of roving warriors.

They found this band, among whom was their companion Accau, and followed them on a grand hunt along the borders of the Mississippi. Du Gay was separated for a time from Hennepin, who was placed in a canoe with a withered squaw more than eighty years old. In spite of her age, she handled her paddle with great address, and used it vigorously, as occasion required, to repress the gambols of three children, who, to Hennepin's annoyance, occupied the middle of the canoe. The hunt was successful. The Sioux warriors, active as deer, chased the buffalo on foot with their stone-headed arrows, on the plains behind the heights that bordered the river; while the old men stood sentinels at the top, watching for the approach of enemies. One day an alarm was given. The warriors rushed towards the supposed point of danger, but found nothing more formidable than two squaws of their own nation, who brought strange news. A war-party of Sioux, they said, had gone towards Lake Superior, and had met by the way five "Spirits;" that is to say, five Europeans. Hennepin was full of curiosity to learn who the strangers might be; and they, on their part, were said to have shown great anxiety to know the nationality of the three white men who, as they were told, were on the river. The hunt was over; and the hunters, with Hennepin and his companion, were on their way northward to their towns, when they met the five "Spirits" at some distance below the Falls of St. Anthony. They proved to

be Daniel Greysolon du Lhut, with four well-armed Frenchmen.

This bold and enterprising man, stigmatized by the Intendant Duchesneau as a leader of *coureurs de bois*, was a cousin of Tonty, born at Lyons. He belonged to that caste of the lesser nobles whose name was legion, and whose admirable military qualities shone forth so conspicuously in the wars of Louis XIV. Though his enterprises were independent of those of La Salle, they were at this time carried on in connection with Count Frontenac and certain merchants in his interest, of whom Du Lhut's uncle, Patron, was one; while Louvigny, his brother-in-law, was in alliance with the governor, and was an officer of his guard. Here, then, was a kind of family league, countenanced by Frontenac, and acting conjointly with him, in order, if the angry letters of the intendant are to be believed, to reap a clandestine profit under the shadow of the governor's authority, and in violation of the royal ordinances. The rudest part of the work fell to the share of Du Lhut, who with a persistent hardihood, not surpassed perhaps even by La Salle, was continually in the forest, in the Indian towns, or in remote wilderness outposts planted by himself, exploring, trading, fighting, ruling lawless savages and whites scarcely less ungovernable, and on one or more occasions varying his life by crossing the ocean to gain interviews with the colonial minister Seignelay, amid the splendid vanities of Versailles. Strange to say, this man of hardy enterprise was a

martyr to the gout, which for more than a quarter of a century grievously tormented him; though for a time he thought himself cured by the intercession of the Iroquois saint, Catharine Tegahkouita, to whom he had made a vow to that end. He was, without doubt, an habitual breaker of the royal ordinances regulating the fur-trade; yet his services were great to the colony and to the crown, and his name deserves a place of honor among the pioneers of American civilization.[1]

[1] The facts concerning Du Lhut have been gleaned from a variety of contemporary documents, chiefly the letters of his enemy Duchesneau, who always puts him in the worst light, especially in his despatch to Seignelay of 10 Nov., 1679, where he charges both him and the governor with carrying on an illicit trade with the English of New York. Du Lhut himself, in a memoir dated 1685 (see Harrisse, *Bibliographie*, 176), strongly denies these charges. Du Lhut built a trading fort on Lake Superior, called Cananistigoyan (La Hontan), or Kamalastigouia (Perrot). It was on the north side, at the mouth of a river entering Thunder Bay, where Fort William now stands. In 1684 he caused two Indians, who had murdered several Frenchmen on Lake Superior, to be shot. He displayed in this affair great courage and coolness, undaunted by the crowd of excited savages who surrounded him and his little band of Frenchmen. The long letter, in which he recounts the capture and execution of the murderers, is before me. Duchesneau makes his conduct on this occasion the ground of a charge of rashness. In 1686 Denonville, then governor of the colony, ordered him to fortify the Detroit; that is, the strait between Lakes Erie and Huron. He went thither with fifty men and built a palisade fort, which he occupied for some time. In 1687 he, together with Tonty and Durantaye, joined Denonville against the Senecas, with a body of Indians from the Upper Lakes. In 1689, during the panic that followed the Iroquois invasion of Montreal, Du Lhut, with twenty-eight Canadians, attacked twenty-two Iroquois in canoes, received their fire without returning it, bore down upon them, killed eighteen of them, and captured three, only one escaping. In 1695 he was in

When Hennepin met him, he had been about two years in the wilderness. In September, 1678, he left Quebec for the purpose of exploring the region of the Upper Mississippi, and establishing relations of friendship with the Sioux and their kindred the Assiniboins. In the summer of 1679 he visited three large towns of the eastern division of the Sioux, including those visited by Hennepin in the following year, and planted the King's arms in all of them. Early in the autumn he was at the head of Lake Superior, holding a council with the Assiniboins and the lake tribes, and inducing them to live at peace with the Sioux. In all this, he acted in a public

command at Fort Frontenac. In 1697 he succeeded to the command of a company of infantry, but was suffering wretchedly from the gout at Fort Frontenac. In 1710 Vaudreuil, in a despatch to the minister Ponchartrain, announced his death as occurring in the previous winter, and added the brief comment, "c'était un très-honnête homme." Other contemporaries speak to the same effect. "Mr. Dulhut, Gentilhomme Lionnois, qui a beaucoup de mérite et de capacité." — *La Hontan*, i. 103 (1703). "Le Sieur du Lut, homme d'esprit et d'expérience." — *Le Clerc*, ii. 137. Charlevoix calls him "one of the bravest officers the King has ever had in this colony." His name is variously spelled Du Luc, Du Lud, Du Lude, Du Lut, Du Luth, Du Lhut. For an account of the Iroquois virgin, Tegahkouita, whose intercession is said to have cured him of the gout, see Charlevoix, i. 572.

On a contemporary manuscript map by the Jesuit Raffeix, representing the routes of Marquette, La Salle, and Du Lhut, are the following words, referring to the last-named discoverer, and interesting in connection with Hennepin's statements: "Mr. du Lude le premier a esté chez les Sioux en 1678, et a esté proche la source du Mississippi, et ensuite vint retirer le P. Louis [*Hennepin*] qui avoit esté fait prisonnier chez les Sioux." Du Lhut here appears as the deliverer of Hennepin. One of his men was named Pepin; hence, no doubt, the name of Lake Pepin.

capacity, under the authority of the governor; but it is not to be supposed that he forgot his own interests or those of his associates. The intendant angrily complains that he aided and abetted the *coureurs de bois* in their lawless courses, and sent down in their canoes great quantities of beaver-skins consigned to the merchants in league with him, under cover of whose names the governor reaped his share of the profits.

In June, 1680, while Hennepin was in the Sioux villages, Du Lhut set out from the head of Lake Superior, with two canoes, four Frenchmen, and an Indian, to continue his explorations.[1] He ascended a river, apparently the Burnt Wood, and reached from thence a branch of the Mississippi, which seems to have been the St. Croix. It was now that, to his surprise, he learned that there were three Europeans on the main river below; and fearing that they might be Englishmen or Spaniards encroaching on the territories of the King, he eagerly pressed forward to solve his doubts. When he saw Hennepin, his mind was set at rest; and the travellers met with mutual cordiality. They followed the Indians to their villages of Mille Lac, where Hennepin had now no reason to complain of their treatment of him. The Sioux gave him and Du Lhut a grand feast of honor, at which were seated a hundred and twenty naked guests; and the great chief Ouasicoudé, with his

[1] *Memoir on the French Dominion in Canada, N. Y. Col. Docs.*, ix. 781.

own hands, placed before Hennepin a bark dish containing a mess of smoked meat and wild rice.

Autumn had come, and the travellers bethought them of going home. The Sioux, consoled by their promises to return with goods for trade, did not oppose their departure; and they set out together, eight white men in all. As they passed St. Anthony's Falls, two of the men stole two buffalo-robes which were hung on trees as offerings to the spirit of the cataract. When Du Lhut heard of it he was very angry, telling the men that they had endangered the lives of the whole party. Hennepin admitted that in the view of human prudence he was right, but urged that the act was good and praiseworthy, inasmuch as the offerings were made to a false god; while the men, on their part, proved mutinous, declaring that they wanted the robes and meant to keep them. The travellers continued their journey in great ill-humor, but were presently soothed by the excellent hunting which they found on the way. As they approached the Wisconsin, they stopped to dry the meat of the buffalo they had killed, when to their amazement they saw a war-party of Sioux approaching in a fleet of canoes. Hennepin represents himself as showing on this occasion an extraordinary courage, going to meet the Indians with a peace-pipe, and instructing Du Lhut, who knew more of these matters than he, how he ought to behave. The Sioux proved not unfriendly, and said nothing of the theft of the buffalo-robes. They soon went on their

way to attack the Illinois and Missouris, leaving the Frenchmen to ascend the Wisconsin unmolested.

After various adventures, they reached the station of the Jesuits at Green Bay; but its existence is wholly ignored by Hennepin, whose zeal for his own Order will not permit him to allude to this establishment of the rival missionaries.[1] He is equally reticent with regard to the Jesuit mission at Michilimackinac, where the party soon after arrived, and where they spent the winter. The only intimation which he gives of its existence consists in the mention of the Jesuit Pierson, who was a Fleming like himself, and who often skated with him on the frozen lake, or kept him company in fishing through a hole in the ice.[2] When the spring opened, Hennepin descended Lake Huron, followed the Detroit to Lake Erie, and proceeded thence to Niagara. Here he spent some time in making a fresh examination of the cataract, and then resumed his voyage on Lake Ontario. He stopped, however, at the great town of the Senecas, near the Genesee, where, with his usual spirit of meddling, he took upon him the functions of the civil and military

[1] On the other hand, he sets down on his map of 1683 a mission of the Récollets at a point north of the farthest sources of the Mississippi, to which no white man had ever penetrated.

[2] He says that Pierson had come among the Indians to learn their language; that he "retained the frankness and rectitude of our country," and "a disposition always on the side of candor and sincerity. In a word, he seemed to me to be all that a Christian ought to be." (1697), 433.

authorities, convoked the chiefs to a council, and urged them to set at liberty certain Ottawa prisoners whom they had captured in violation of treaties. Having settled this affair to his satisfaction, he went to Fort Frontenac, where his brother missionary, Buisset, received him with a welcome rendered the warmer by a story which had reached him that the Indians had hanged Hennepin with his own cord of St. Francis.

From Fort Frontenac he went to Montreal; and leaving his two men on a neighboring island, that they might escape the payment of duties on a quantity of furs which they had with them, he paddled alone towards the town. Count Frontenac chanced to be here, and, looking from the window of a house near the river, he saw approaching in a canoe a Récollet father, whose appearance indicated the extremity of hard service; for his face was worn and sunburnt, and his tattered habit of St. Francis was abundantly patched with scraps of buffalo-skin. When at length he recognized the long-lost Hennepin, he received him, as the father writes, "with all the tenderness which a missionary could expect from a person of his rank and quality." He kept him for twelve days in his own house, and listened with interest to such of his adventures as the friar saw fit to divulge.

And here we bid farewell to Father Hennepin. "Providence," he writes, "preserved my life that I might make known my great discoveries to the world." He soon after went to Europe, where the

story of his travels found a host of readers, but where he died at last in a deserved obscurity.[1]

[1] Since the two preceding chapters were written, the letters of La Salle have been brought to light by the researches of M. Margry. They confirm, in nearly all points, the conclusions given above; though, as before observed (*note*, i. 186), they show misstatements on the part of Hennepin concerning his position at the outset of the expedition. La Salle writes: "J'ay fait remonter le fleuve Colbert, nommé par les Iroquois Gastacha, par les Outaouais Mississipy par un canot conduit par deux de mes gens, l'un nommé Michel Accault et l'autre Picard, auxquels le R. P. Hennepin se joignit pour ne perdre pas l'occasion de prescher l'Évangile aux peuples qui habitent dessus et qui n'en avoient jamais oui parler." In the same letter he recounts their voyage on the Upper Mississippi, and their capture by the Sioux in accordance with the story of Hennepin himself. Hennepin's assertion, that La Salle had promised to send a number of men to meet him at the mouth of the Wisconsin, turns out to be true. "Estans tous revenus en chasse avec les Nadouessioux [*Sioux*] vers Ouisconsing [*Wisconsin*], le R. P. Louis Hempin [*Hennepin*] et Picard prirent résolution de venir jusqu'à l'emboucheure de la rivière où j'avois promis d'envoyer de mes nouvelles, comme j'avois fait par six hommes que les Jésuistes desbauchèrent en leur disant que le R. P. Louis et ses compagnons de voyage avoient esté tuez."

It is clear that La Salle understood Hennepin; for, after speaking of his journey, he adds: "J'ai cru qu'il estoit à propos de vous faire le narré des aventures de ce canot parce que je ne doute pas qu'on en parle; et si vous souhaitez en conférer avec le P. Louis Hempin, Récollect, qui est repassé en France, il faut un peu le connoistre, car il ne manquera pas d'exagérer toutes choses, c'est son caractère, et à moy mesme il m'a escrit comme s'il eust esté tout près d'estre bruslé, quoiqu'il n'en ait pas esté seulement en danger; mais il croit qu'il luy est honorable de le faire de la sorte, et *il parle plus conformément à ce qu'il veut qu'à ce qu'il scait.*" — *Lettre de la Salle*, 22 *Août*, 1682 (1681 ?), Margry, ii. 259.

On his return to France, Hennepin got hold of the manuscript, *Relation des Découvertes*, compiled for the government from La Salle's letters, and, as already observed, made very free use of it in the first edition of his book, printed in 1683. In 1699 he wished to return to Canada; but, in a letter of that year, Louis XIV. orders

the governor to seize him, should he appear, and send him prisoner to Rochefort. This seems to have been in consequence of his renouncing the service of the French crown, and dedicating his edition of 1697 to William III. of England.

More than twenty editions of Hennepin's travels appeared, in French, English, Dutch, German, Italian, and Spanish. Most of them include the mendacious narrative of the pretended descent of the Mississippi. For a list of them, see *Hist. Mag.*, i. 346; ii. 24.

CHAPTER XIX.

1681.

LA SALLE BEGINS ANEW.

His Constancy; his Plans; his Savage Allies; he becomes Snow-blind. — Negotiations. — Grand Council. — La Salle's Oratory. — Meeting with Tonty. — Preparation. — Departure.

In tracing the adventures of Tonty and the rovings of Hennepin, we have lost sight of La Salle, the pivot of the enterprise. Returning from the desolation and horror in the valley of the Illinois, he had spent the winter at Fort Miami, on the St. Joseph, by the borders of Lake Michigan. Here he might have brooded on the redoubled ruin that had befallen him, — the desponding friends, the exulting foes; the wasted energies, the crushing load of debt, the stormy past, the black and lowering future. But his mind was of a different temper. He had no thought but to grapple with adversity, and out of the fragments of his ruin to build up the fabric of success.

He would not recoil; but he modified his plans to meet the new contingency. His white enemies had found, or rather perhaps had made, a savage ally in the Iroquois. Their incursions must be stopped, or

his enterprise would come to nought; and he thought he saw the means by which this new danger could be converted into a source of strength. The tribes of the West, threatened by the common enemy, might be taught to forget their mutual animosities and join in a defensive league, with La Salle at its head. They might be colonized around his fort in the valley of the Illinois, where in the shadow of the French flag, and with the aid of French allies, they could hold the Iroquois in check, and acquire in some measure the arts of a settled life. The Franciscan friars could teach them the Faith; and La Salle and his associates could supply them with goods, in exchange for the vast harvest of furs which their hunters could gather in these boundless wilds. Meanwhile, he would seek out the mouth of the Mississippi; and the furs gathered at his colony in the Illinois would then find a ready passage to the markets of the world. Thus might this ancient slaughter-field of warring savages be redeemed to civilization and Christianity; and a stable settlement, half-feudal, half-commercial, grow up in the heart of the western wilderness. This plan was but a part of the original scheme of his enterprise, adapted to new and unexpected circumstances; and he now set himself to its execution with his usual vigor, joined to an address which, when dealing with Indians, never failed him.

There were allies close at hand. Near Fort Miami were the huts of twenty-five or thirty savages, exiles

from their homes, and strangers in this western world. Several of the English colonies, from Virginia to Maine, had of late years been harassed by Indian wars; and the Puritans of New England, above all, had been scourged by the deadly outbreak of King Philip's war. Those engaged in it had paid a bitter price for their brief triumphs. A band of refugees, chiefly Abenakis and Mohegans, driven from their native seats, had roamed into these distant wilds, and were wintering in the friendly neighborhood of the French. La Salle soon won them over to his interests. One of their number was the Mohegan hunter, who for two years had faithfully followed his fortunes, and who had been four years in the West. He is described as a prudent and discreet young man, in whom La Salle had great confidence, and who could make himself understood in several western languages, belonging, like his own, to the great Algonquin tongue. This devoted henchman proved an efficient mediator with his countrymen. The New-England Indians, with one voice, promised to follow La Salle, asking no recompense but to call him their chief, and yield to him the love and admiration which he rarely failed to command from this hero-worshipping race.

New allies soon appeared. A Shawanoe chief from the valley of the Ohio, whose following embraced a hundred and fifty warriors, came to ask the protection of the French against the all-destroying Iroquois. "The Shawanoes are too distant," was La Salle's

reply; "but let them come to me at the Illinois, and they shall be safe." The chief promised to join him in the autumn, at Fort Miami, with all his band. But, more important than all, the consent and co-operation of the Illinois must be gained; and the Miamis, their neighbors and of late their enemies, must be taught the folly of their league with the Iroquois, and the necessity of joining in the new confederation. Of late, they had been made to see the perfidy of their dangerous allies. A band of the Iroquois, returning from the slaughter of the Tamaroa Illinois, had met and murdered a band of Miamis on the Ohio, and had not only refused satisfaction, but had intrenched themselves in three rude forts of trees and brushwood in the heart of the Miami country. The moment was favorable for negotiating; but, first, La Salle wished to open a communication with the Illinois, some of whom had begun to return to the country they had abandoned. With this view, and also, it seems, to procure provisions, he set out on the first of March, with his lieutenant La Forest, and fifteen men.

The country was sheeted in snow, and the party journeyed on snow-shoes; but when they reached the open prairies, the white expanse glared in the sun with so dazzling a brightness that La Salle and several of the men became snow-blind. They stopped and encamped under the edge of a forest; and here La Salle remained in darkness for three days, suffering extreme pain. Meanwhile, he sent forward La

Forest and most of the men, keeping with him his old attendant Hunaut. Going out in quest of pine-leaves, — a decoction of which was supposed to be useful in cases of snow-blindness, — this man discovered the fresh tracks of Indians, followed them, and found a camp of Outagamies, or Foxes, from the neighborhood of Green Bay. From them he heard welcome news. They told him that Tonty was safe among the Pottawattamies, and that Hennepin had passed through their country on his return from among the Sioux.[1]

A thaw took place; the snow melted rapidly; the rivers were opened; the blind men began to recover; and launching the canoes which they had dragged after them, the party pursued their way by water. They soon met a band of Illinois. La Salle gave them presents, condoled with them on their losses, and urged them to make peace and alliance with the Miamis. Thus, he said, they could set the Iroquois at defiance; for he himself, with his Frenchmen and his Indian friends, would make his abode among them, supply them with goods, and aid them to defend themselves. They listened, well pleased, promised to carry his message to their countrymen, and furnished him with a large supply of corn.[2] Meanwhile he had rejoined La Forest, whom he now

[1] *Relation des Découvertes.* Compare *Lettre de La Salle* (Margry, ii. 144).

[2] This seems to have been taken from the secret repositories, or *caches*, of the ruined town of the Illinois.

sent to Michilimackinac to await Tonty, and tell him to remain there till he, La Salle, should arrive.

Having thus accomplished the objects of his journey, he returned to Fort Miami, whence he soon after ascended the St. Joseph to the village of the Miami Indians, on the portage, at the head of the Kankakee. Here he found unwelcome guests. These were three Iroquois warriors, who had been for some time in the place, and who, as he was told, had demeaned themselves with the insolence of conquerors, and spoken of the French with the utmost contempt. He hastened to confront them, rebuked and menaced them, and told them that now, when he was present, they dared not repeat the calumnies which they had uttered in his absence. They stood abashed and confounded, and during the following night secretly left the town and fled. The effect was prodigious on the minds of the Miamis, when they saw that La Salle, backed by ten Frenchmen, could command from their arrogant visitors a respect which they, with their hundreds of warriors, had wholly failed to inspire. Here, at the outset, was an augury full of promise for the approaching negotiations.

There were other strangers in the town, — a band of eastern Indians, more numerous than those who had wintered at the fort. The greater number were from Rhode Island, including, probably, some of King Philip's warriors; others were from New York, and others again from Virginia. La Salle called

them to a council, promised them a new home in the West under the protection of the Great King, with rich lands, an abundance of game, and French traders to supply them with the goods which they had once received from the English. Let them but help him to make peace between the Miamis and the Illinois, and he would insure for them a future of prosperity and safety. They listened with open ears, and promised their aid in the work of peace.

On the next morning, the Miamis were called to a grand council. It was held in the lodge of their chief, from which the mats were removed, that the crowd without might hear what was said. La Salle rose and harangued the concourse. Few men were so skilled in the arts of forest rhetoric and diplomacy. After the Indian mode, he was, to follow his chroniclers, "the greatest orator in North America."[1] He began with a gift of tobacco, to clear the brains of his auditory; next, for he had brought a canoe-load of presents to support his eloquence, he gave them cloth to cover their dead, coats to dress them, hatchets to build a grand scaffold in their honor, and beads, bells, and trinkets of all sorts, to decorate their relatives at a grand funeral feast. All this was mere metaphor. The living, while appropriating the gifts to their own use, were pleased at the compliment offered to their dead; and their delight redoubled as the orator proceeded. One of their

[1] "En ce genre, il étoit le plus grand orateur de l'Amérique Septentrionale." — *Relation des Découvertes.*

great chiefs had lately been killed; and La Salle, after a eulogy of the departed, declared that he would now raise him to life again; that is, that he would assume his name and give support to his squaws and children. This flattering announcement drew forth an outburst of applause; and when, to confirm his words, his attendants placed before them a huge pile of coats, shirts, and hunting-knives, the whole assembly exploded in yelps of admiration.

Now came the climax of the harangue, introduced by a further present of six guns: —

"He who is my master, and the master of all this country, is a mighty chief, feared by the whole world; but he loves peace, and the words of his lips are for good alone. He is called the King of France, and he is the mightiest among the chiefs beyond the great water. His goodness reaches even to your dead, and his subjects come among you to raise them up to life. But it is his will to preserve the life he has given; it is his will that you should obey his laws, and make no war without the leave of Onontio, who commands in his name at Quebec, and who loves all the nations alike, because such is the will of the Great King. You ought, then, to live at peace with your neighbors, and above all with the Illinois. You have had causes of quarrel with them; but their defeat has avenged you. Though they are still strong, they wish to make peace with you. Be content with the glory of having obliged them to ask for it. You have an interest in preserving them; since,

if the Iroquois destroy them, they will next destroy you. Let us all obey the Great King, and live together in peace, under his protection. Be of my mind, and use these guns that I have given you, not to make war, but only to hunt and to defend yourselves."[1]

So saying, he gave two belts of wampum to confirm his words; and the assembly dissolved. On the following day, the chiefs again convoked it, and made their reply in form. It was all that La Salle could have wished. "The Illinois is our brother, because he is the son of our Father, the Great King." "We make you the master of our beaver and our lands, of our minds and our bodies." "We cannot wonder that our brothers from the East wish to live with you. We should have wished so too, if we had known what a blessing it is to be the children of the Great King." The rest of this auspicious day was passed in feasts and dances, in which La Salle and his Frenchmen all bore part. His new scheme was hopefully begun. It remained to achieve the enterprise, twice defeated, of the discovery of the mouth of the Mississippi, — that vital condition of his triumph, without which all other success was meaningless and vain.

To this end he must return to Canada, appease his creditors, and collect his scattered resources. Towards the end of May he set out in canoes from

[1] Translated from the *Relation*, where these councils are reported at great length.

Fort Miami, and reached Michilimackinac after a prosperous voyage. Here, to his great joy, he found Tonty and Zenobe Membré, who had lately arrived from Green Bay. The meeting was one at which even his stoic nature must have melted. Each had for the other a tale of disaster; but when La Salle recounted the long succession of his reverses, it was with the tranquil tone and cheerful look of one who relates the incidents of an ordinary journey. Membré looked on him with admiration. "Any one else," he says, "would have thrown up his hand and abandoned the enterprise; but, far from this, with a firmness and constancy that never had its equal, I saw him more resolved than ever to continue his work and push forward his discovery."[1]

Without loss of time they embarked together for Fort Frontenac, paddled their canoes a thousand miles, and safely reached their destination. Here, in this third beginning of his enterprise, La Salle found himself beset with embarrassments. Not only was he burdened with the fruitless costs of his two former efforts, but the heavy debts which he had incurred in building and maintaining Fort Frontenac had not been wholly paid. The fort and the seigniory were already deeply mortgaged; yet through the influence of Count Frontenac, the assistance of his

[1] Membré in Le Clerc, ii. 208. Tonty, in his memoir of 1693, speaks of the joy of La Salle at the meeting. The *Relation*, usually very accurate, says, erroneously, that Tonty had gone to Fort Frontenac. La Forest had gone thither, not long before La Salle's arrival.

secretary Barrois, a consummate man of business, and the support of a wealthy relative, he found means to appease his creditors and even to gain fresh advances. To this end, however, he was forced to part with a portion of his monopolies. Having first made his will at Montreal, in favor of a cousin who had befriended him,[1] he mustered his men, and once more set forth, resolved to trust no more to agents, but to lead on his followers, in a united body, under his own personal command.[2]

At the beginning of autumn he was at Toronto, where the long and difficult portage to Lake Simcoe detained him a fortnight. He spent a part of it in writing an account of what had lately occurred to a correspondent in France, and he closes his letter thus: "This is all I can tell you this year. I have a hundred things to write, but you could not believe how hard it is to do it among Indians. The canoes and their lading must be got over the portage, and I must speak to them continually and bear all their importunity, or else they will do nothing I want. I hope to write more at leisure next year, and tell you

[1] *Copie du Testament du deffunt Sr de la Salle*, 11 *Août*, 1681. The relative was François Plet, to whom he was deeply in debt.

[2] "On apprendra à la fin de cette année, 1682, le succès de la découverte qu'il étoit résolu d'achever, au plus tard le printemps dernier ou de périr en y travaillant. Tant de traverses et de malheurs toujours arrivés en son absence l'ont fait résoudre à ne se fier plus à personne et à conduire lui-même tout son monde, tout son équipage, et toute son entreprise, de laquelle il espéroit une heureuse conclusion."

The above is a part of the closing paragraph of the *Relation des Découvertes*, so often cited.

the end of this business, which I hope will turn out well: for I have M. de Tonty, who is full of zeal; thirty Frenchmen, all good men, without reckoning such as I cannot trust; and more than a hundred Indians, some of them Shawanoes, and others from New England, all of whom know how to use guns."

It was October before he reached Lake Huron. Day after day and week after week the heavy-laden canoes crept on along the lonely wilderness shores, by the monotonous ranks of bristling moss-bearded firs; lake and forest, forest and lake; a dreary scene haunted with yet more dreary memories, — disasters, sorrows, and deferred hopes; time, strength, and wealth spent in vain; a ruinous past and a doubtful future; slander, obloquy, and hate. With unmoved heart, the patient voyager held his course, and drew up his canoes at last on the beach at Fort Miami.

CHAPTER XX.

1681–1682.

SUCCESS OF LA SALLE.

His Followers. — The Chicago Portage. — Descent of the Mississippi. — The Lost Hunter. — The Arkansas. — The Taensas. — The Natchez. — Hostility. — The Mouth of the Mississippi. — Louis XIV. proclaimed Sovereign of the Great West.

The season was far advanced. On the bare limbs of the forest hung a few withered remnants of its gay autumnal livery; and the smoke crept upward through the sullen November air from the squalid wigwams of La Salle's Abenaki and Mohegan allies. These, his new friends, were savages whose midnight yells had startled the border hamlets of New England; who had danced around Puritan scalps, and whom Puritan imaginations painted as incarnate fiends. La Salle chose eighteen of them, whom he added to the twenty-three Frenchmen who remained with him, some of the rest having deserted and others lagged behind. The Indians insisted on taking their squaws with them. These were ten in number, besides three children; and thus the expedition included fifty-four persons, of whom some were useless, and others a burden.

On the 21st of December, Tonty and Membré set out from Fort Miami with some of the party in six canoes, and crossed to the little river Chicago.[1] La Salle, with the rest of the men, joined them a few days later. It was the dead of winter, and the streams were frozen. They made sledges, placed on them the canoes, the baggage, and a disabled Frenchman; crossed from the Chicago to the northern branch of the Illinois, and filed in a long procession down its frozen course. They reached the site of the great Illinois village, found it tenantless, and continued their journey, still dragging their canoes, till at length they reached open water below Lake Peoria.

La Salle had abandoned for a time his original plan of building a vessel for the navigation of the Mississippi. Bitter experience had taught him the difficulty of the attempt, and he resolved to trust to

[1] La Salle, *Relation de la Découverte*, 1682, in Thomassy, *Géologie Pratique de la Louisiane*, 9; *Lettre du Père Zenobe Membré*, 3 *Juin*, 1682; *Ibid.*, 14 *Août*, 1682; Membré in Le Clerc, ii. 214; Tonty, 1684, 1693; *Procès Verbal de la Prise de Possession de la Louisiane; Feuilles détachées d'une Lettre de La Salle* (Margry, ii. 164); *Récit de Nicolas de la Salle* (Ibid., i. 547).

The narrative ascribed to Membré and published by Le Clerc is based on the document preserved in the Archives Scientifiques de la Marine, entitled *Relation de la Découverte de l'Embouchure de la Rivière Mississippi faite par le Sieur de la Salle, l'année passée*, 1682. The writer of the narrative has used it very freely, copying the greater part verbatim, with occasional additions of a kind which seem to indicate that he had taken part in the expedition. The *Relation de la Découverte*, though written in the third person, is the official report of the discovery made by La Salle, or perhaps for him by Membré.

his canoes alone. They embarked again, floating prosperously down between the leafless forests that flanked the tranquil river; till, on the sixth of February, they issued upon the majestic bosom of the Mississippi. Here, for the time, their progress was stopped; for the river was full of floating ice. La Salle's Indians, too, had lagged behind; but within a week all had arrived, the navigation was once more free, and they resumed their course. Towards evening they saw on their right the mouth of a great river; and the clear current was invaded by the headlong torrent of the Missouri, opaque with mud. They built their camp-fires in the neighboring forest; and at daylight, embarking anew on the dark and mighty stream, drifted swiftly down towards unknown destinies. They passed a deserted town of the Tamaroas; saw, three days after, the mouth of the Ohio;[1] and, gliding by the wastes of bordering swamp, landed on the twenty-fourth of February near the Third Chickasaw Bluffs.[2] They encamped, and the hunters went out for game. All returned, excepting Pierre Prudhomme; and as the others had seen fresh tracks of Indians, La Salle feared that he was killed. While some of his followers built a small stockade fort on a high bluff[3] by the river, others

[1] Called by Membré the Ouabache (Wabash).

[2] La Salle, *Relation de la Découverte de l'Embouchure, etc.*; Thomassy, 10. Membré gives the same date; but the *Procès Verbal* makes it the twenty-sixth.

[3] Gravier, in his letter of 16 Feb., 1701, says that he encamped near a "great bluff of stone, called Fort Prudhomme, because M. de

ranged the woods in pursuit of the missing hunter. After six days of ceaseless and fruitless search, they met two Chickasaw Indians in the forest; and through them La Salle sent presents and peace-messages to that warlike people, whose villages were a few days' journey distant. Several days later Prudhomme was found, and brought into the camp, half-dead. He had lost his way while hunting; and to console him for his woes La Salle christened the newly built fort with his name, and left him, with a few others, in charge of it.

Again they embarked; and with every stage of their adventurous progress the mystery of this vast New World was more and more unveiled. More and more they entered the realms of spring. The hazy sunlight, the warm and drowsy air, the tender foliage, the opening flowers, betokened the reviving life of Nature. For several days more they followed the writhings of the great river on its tortuous course through wastes of swamp and canebrake, till on the thirteenth of March[1] they found themselves wrapped in a thick fog. Neither shore was visible; but they heard on the right the booming of an Indian drum and the shrill outcries of the war-dance. La Salle at once crossed to the opposite side, where, in less than an hour, his men threw up a rude fort of felled trees.

la Salle, going on his discovery, intrenched himself here with his party, fearing that Prudhomme, who had lost himself in the woods, had been killed by the Indians, and that he himself would be attacked."

[1] La Salle, *Relation*; Thomassy, 11.

Meanwhile the fog cleared; and from the farther bank the astonished Indians saw the strange visitors at their work. Some of the French advanced to the edge of the water, and beckoned them to come over. Several of them approached, in a wooden canoe, to within the distance of a gun-shot. La Salle displayed the calumet, and sent a Frenchman to meet them. He was well received; and the friendly mood of the Indians being now apparent, the whole party crossed the river.

On landing, they found themselves at a town of the Kappa band of the Arkansas, a people dwelling near the mouth of the river which bears their name. "The whole village," writes Membré to his superior, "came down to the shore to meet us, except the women, who had run off. I cannot tell you the civility and kindness we received from these barbarians, who brought us poles to make huts, supplied us with firewood during the three days we were among them, and took turns in feasting us. But, my Reverend Father, this gives no idea of the good qualities of these savages, who are gay, civil, and free-hearted. The young men, though the most alert and spirited we had seen, are nevertheless so modest that not one of them would take the liberty to enter our hut, but all stood quietly at the door. They are so well formed that we were in admiration at their beauty. We did not lose the value of a pin while we were among them."

Various were the dances and ceremonies with which

they entertained the strangers, who, on their part, responded with a solemnity which their hosts would have liked less if they had understood it better. La Salle and Tonty, at the head of their followers, marched to the open area in the midst of the village. Here, to the admiration of the gazing crowd of warriors, women, and children, a cross was raised bearing the arms of France. Membré, in canonicals, sang a hymn; the men shouted *Vive le Roi;* and La Salle, in the King's name, took formal possession of the country.[1] The friar, not, he flatters himself, without success, labored to expound by signs the mysteries of the Faith; while La Salle, by methods equally satisfactory, drew from the chief an acknowledgment of fealty to Louis XIV.[2]

After touching at several other towns of this people, the voyagers resumed their course, guided by two of the Arkansas; passed the sites, since become historic, of Vicksburg and Grand Gulf; and, about three hundred miles below the Arkansas, stopped by the edge of a swamp on the western side of the

[1] *Procès Verbal de la Prise de Possession du Pays des Arkansas*, 14 *Mars*, 1682.

[2] The nation of the Akanseas, Alkansas, or Arkansas, dwelt on the west bank of the Mississippi, near the mouth of the Arkansas. They were divided into four tribes, living for the most part in separate villages. Those first visited by La Salle were the Kappas, or Quapaws, a remnant of whom still subsists. The others were the Topingas, or Tongengas; the Torimans; and the Osotouoy, or Sauthouis. According to Charlevoix, who saw them in 1721, they were regarded as the tallest and best-formed Indians in America, and were known as *les Beaux Hommes*. Gravier says that they once lived on the Ohio.

river.[1] Here, as their two guides told them, was the path to the great town of the Taensas. Tonty and Membré were sent to visit it. They and their men shouldered their birch canoe through the swamp, and launched it on a lake which had once formed a portion of the channel of the river. In two hours, they reached the town; and Tonty gazed at it with astonishment. He had seen nothing like it in America, — large square dwellings, built of sun-baked mud mixed with straw, arched over with a dome-shaped roof of canes, and placed in regular order around an open area. Two of them were larger and better than the rest. One was the lodge of the chief; the other was the temple, or house of the Sun. They entered the former, and found a single room, forty feet square, where, in the dim light, — for there was no opening but the door, — the chief sat awaiting them on a sort of bedstead, three of his wives at his side; while sixty old men, wrapped in white cloaks woven of mulberry-bark, formed his divan. When he spoke, his wives howled to do him honor; and the assembled councillors listened with the reverence due to a potentate for whom, at his death, a hundred victims were to be sacrificed. He received the visitors graciously, and joyfully

[1] In Tensas County, Louisiana. Tonty's estimates of distance are here much too low. They seem to be founded on observations of latitude, without reckoning the windings of the river. It may interest sportsmen to know that the party killed several large alligators on their way. Membré is much astonished that such monsters should be born of eggs like chickens.

accepted the gifts which Tonty laid before him.[1] This interview over, the Frenchmen repaired to the temple, wherein were kept the bones of the departed chiefs. In construction, it was much like the royal dwelling. Over it were rude wooden figures, representing three eagles turned towards the east. A strong mud wall surrounded it, planted with stakes, on which were stuck the skulls of enemies sacrificed to the Sun; while before the door was a block of wood, on which lay a large shell surrounded with the braided hair of the victims. The interior was rude as a barn, dimly lighted from the doorway, and full of smoke. There was a structure in the middle which Membré thinks was a kind of altar; and before it burned a perpetual fire, fed with three logs laid end to end, and watched by two old men devoted to this sacred office. There was a mysterious recess, too, which the strangers were forbidden to explore, but which, as Tonty was told, contained the riches of the nation, consisting of pearls from the Gulf, and trinkets obtained, probably through other tribes, from the Spaniards and other Europeans.

The chief condescended to visit La Salle at his camp, — a favor which he would by no means have granted, had the visitors been Indians. A master of ceremonies and six attendants preceded him, to clear

[1] Tonty, 1684, 1693. In the spurious narrative, published in Tonty's name, the account is embellished and exaggerated. Compare Membré in Le Clerc, ii. 227. La Salle's statements in the *Relation* of 1682 (Thomassy, 12) sustain those of Tonty.

Tonty offered Presents to the Chief of the Taensas.

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the path and prepare the place of meeting. When all was ready, he was seen advancing, clothed in a white robe and preceded by two men bearing white fans, while a third displayed a disk of burnished copper, — doubtless to represent the Sun, his ancestor, or, as others will have it, his elder brother. His aspect was marvellously grave, and he and La Salle met with gestures of ceremonious courtesy. The interview was very friendly; and the chief returned well pleased with the gifts which his entertainer bestowed on him, and which, indeed, had been the principal motive of his visit.

On the next morning, as they descended the river, they saw a wooden canoe full of Indians; and Tonty gave chase. He had nearly overtaken it, when more than a hundred men appeared suddenly on the shore, with bows bent to defend their countrymen. La Salle called out to Tonty to withdraw. He obeyed; and the whole party encamped on the opposite bank. Tonty offered to cross the river with a peace-pipe, and set out accordingly with a small party of men. When he landed, the Indians made signs of friendship by joining their hands, — a proceeding by which Tonty, having but one hand, was somewhat embarrassed; but he directed his men to respond in his stead. La Salle and Membré now joined him, and went with the Indians to their village, three leagues distant. Here they spent the night. "The Sieur de la Salle," writes Membré, "whose very air, engaging manners, tact, and address attract love and

respect alike, produced such an effect on the hearts of these people that they did not know how to treat us well enough."[1]

The Indians of this village were the Natchez; and their chief was brother of the great chief, or Sun, of the whole nation. His town was several leagues distant, near the site of the city of Natchez; and thither the French repaired to visit him. They saw what they had already seen among the Taensas, — a religious and political despotism, a privileged caste descended from the sun, a temple, and a sacred fire.[2]

[1] Membré in Le Clerc, ii. 232.

[2] The Natchez and the Taensas, whose habits and customs were similar, did not, in their social organization, differ radically from other Indians. The same principle of clanship, or *totemship*, so widely spread, existed in full force among them, combined with their religious ideas, and developed into forms of which no other example, equally distinct, is to be found. (For Indian clanship, see "The Jesuits in North America," *Introduction*.) Among the Natchez and Taensas, the principal clan formed a ruling caste; and its chiefs had the attributes of demi-gods. As descent was through the female, the chief's son never succeeded him, but the son of one of his sisters; and as she, by the usual totemic law, was forced to marry in another clan, — that is, to marry a common mortal, — her husband, though the destined father of a demi-god, was treated by her as little better than a slave. She might kill him, if he proved unfaithful; but he was forced to submit to her infidelities in silence.

The customs of the Natchez have been described by Du Pratz, Le Petit, Penicaut, and others. Charlevoix visited their temple in 1721, and found it in a somewhat shabby condition. At this time, the Taensas were extinct. In 1729 the Natchez, enraged by the arbitrary conduct of a French commandant, massacred the neighboring settlers, and were in consequence expelled from their country and nearly destroyed. A few still survive, incorporated with the Creeks; but they have lost their peculiar customs.

La Salle planted a large cross, with the arms of France attached, in the midst of the town; while the inhabitants looked on with a satisfaction which they would hardly have displayed had they understood the meaning of the act.

The French next visited the Coroas, at their village two leagues below; and here they found a reception no less auspicious. On the thirty-first of March, as they approached Red River, they passed in the fog a town of the Oumas, and three days later discovered a party of fishermen, in wooden canoes, among the canes along the margin of the water. They fled at sight of the Frenchmen. La Salle sent men to reconnoitre, who, as they struggled through the marsh, were greeted with a shower of arrows; while from the neighboring village of the Quinipissas,[1] invisible behind the canebrake, they heard the sound of an Indian drum and the whoops of the mustering warriors. La Salle, anxious to keep the peace with all the tribes along the river, recalled his men, and pursued his voyage. A few leagues below they saw a cluster of Indian lodges on the left bank, apparently void of inhabitants. They landed, and found three of them filled with corpses. It was a village of the Tangibao, sacked by their enemies only a few days before.[2]

[1] In St. Charles County, on the left bank, not far above New Orleans.

[2] Hennepin uses this incident, as well as most of those which have preceded it, in making up the story of his pretended voyage to the Gulf.

And now they neared their journey's end. On the sixth of April the river divided itself into three broad channels. La Salle followed that of the west, and Dautray that of the east; while Tonty took the middle passage. As he drifted down the turbid current, between the low and marshy shores, the brackish water changed to brine, and the breeze grew fresh with the salt breath of the sea. Then the broad bosom of the great Gulf opened on his sight, tossing its restless billows, limitless, voiceless, lonely as when born of chaos, without a sail, without a sign of life.

La Salle, in a canoe, coasted the marshy borders of the sea; and then the reunited parties assembled on a spot of dry ground, a short distance above the mouth of the river. Here a column was made ready, bearing the arms of France, and inscribed with the words, "LOUIS LE GRAND, ROY DE FRANCE ET DE NAVARRE, RÈGNE; LE NEUVIÈME AVRIL, 1682."

The Frenchmen were mustered under arms; and while the New England Indians and their squaws looked on in wondering silence, they chanted the *Te Deum*, the *Exaudiat*, and the *Domine salvum fac Regem*. Then, amid volleys of musketry and shouts of *Vive le Roi*, La Salle planted the column in its place, and, standing near it, proclaimed in a loud voice, —

"In the name of the most high, mighty, invincible, and victorious Prince, Louis the Great, by the grace of God King of France and of Navarre, Fourteenth of that name, I, this ninth day of April, one thousand six hundred and eighty-two, in virtue of the commis-

La Salle's Expedition to Louisiana.

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sion of his Majesty, which I hold in my hand, and which may be seen by all whom it may concern, have taken, and do now take, in the name of his Majesty and of his successors to the crown, possession of this country of Louisiana, the seas, harbors, ports, bays, adjacent straits, and all the nations, peoples, provinces, cities, towns, villages, mines, minerals, fisheries, streams, and rivers, within the extent of the said Louisiana, from the mouth of the great river St. Louis, otherwise called the Ohio, . . . as also along the river Colbert, or Mississippi, and the rivers which discharge themselves thereinto, from its source beyond the country of the Nadouessioux . . . as far as its mouth at the sea, or Gulf of Mexico, and also to the mouth of the River of Palms, upon the assurance we have had from the natives of these countries that we are the first Europeans who have descended or ascended the said river Colbert; hereby protesting against all who may hereafter undertake to invade any or all of these aforesaid countries, peoples, or lands, to the prejudice of the rights of his Majesty, acquired by the consent of the nations dwelling herein. Of which, and of all else that is needful, I hereby take to witness those who hear me, and demand an act of the notary here present."[1]

[1] In the passages omitted above, for the sake of brevity, the Ohio is mentioned as being called also the *Olighin-* (Alleghany) *Sipou*, and *Chukagoua;* and La Salle declares that he takes possession of the country with the consent of the nations dwelling in it, of whom he names the Chaouanons (Shawanoes), Kious, or Nadouessious (Sioux), Chikachas (Chickasaws), Motantees (?), Illinois, Mitchi-

Shouts of *Vive le Roi* and volleys of musketry responded to his words. Then a cross was planted beside the column, and a leaden plate buried near it, bearing the arms of France, with a Latin inscription, *Ludovicus Magnus regnat.* The weather-beaten voyagers joined their voices in the grand hymn of the *Vexilla Regis* : —

> " The banners of Heaven's King advance,
> The mystery of the Cross shines forth ; "

and renewed shouts of *Vive le Roi* closed the ceremony.

On that day, the realm of France received on parchment a stupendous accession. The fertile plains of Texas; the vast basin of the Mississippi, from its frozen northern springs to the sultry borders of the Gulf; from the woody ridges of the Alleghanies to the bare peaks of the Rocky Mountains, — a region of savannas and forests, sun-cracked deserts, and grassy prairies, watered by a thousand rivers, ranged by a thousand warlike tribes, passed beneath the sceptre of the Sultan of Versailles; and all by virtue of a feeble human voice, inaudible at half a mile.

gamias, Arkansas, Natchez, and Koroas. This alleged consent is, of course, mere farce. If there could be any doubt as to the meaning of the words of La Salle, as recorded in the *Procès Verbal de la Prise de Possession de la Louisiane*, it would be set at rest by Le Clerc, who says : " Le Sieur de la Salle prit au nom de sa Majesté possession de ce fleuve, *de toutes les rivières qui y entrent, et de tous les pays qu'elles arrosent.*" These words are borrowed from the report of La Salle (see Thomassy, 14). A copy of the original *Procès Verbal* is before me. It bears the name of Jacques de la Metairie, Notary of Fort Frontenac, who was one of the party.

CHAPTER XXI.

1682, 1683.

ST. LOUIS OF THE ILLINOIS.

LOUISIANA. — ILLNESS OF LA SALLE: HIS COLONY ON THE ILLINOIS. — FORT ST. LOUIS. — RECALL OF FRONTENAC. — LE FEBVRE DE LA BARRE. — CRITICAL POSITION OF LA SALLE. — HOSTILITY OF THE NEW GOVERNOR. — TRIUMPH OF THE ADVERSE FACTION. — LA SALLE SAILS FOR FRANCE.

LOUISIANA was the name bestowed by La Salle on the new domain of the French crown. The rule of the Bourbons in the West is a memory of the past, but the name of the Great King still survives in a narrow corner of their lost empire. The Louisiana of to-day is but a single State of the American republic. The Louisiana of La Salle stretched from the Alleghanies to the Rocky Mountains; from the Rio Grande and the Gulf to the farthest springs of the Missouri.[1]

[1] The boundaries are laid down on the great map of Franquelin, made in 1684, and preserved in the Dépôt des Cartes of the Marine. The line runs along the south shore of Lake Erie, and thence follows the heads of the streams flowing into Lake Michigan. It then turns northwest, and is lost in the vast unknown of the now British Territories. On the south, it is drawn by the heads of the streams flowing into the Gulf, as far west as Mobile, after which it follows

La Salle had written his name in history; but his hard-earned success was but the prelude of a harder task. Herculean labors lay before him, if he would realize the schemes with which his brain was pregnant. Bent on accomplishing them, he retraced his course, and urged his canoes upward against the muddy current. The party were famished. They had little to subsist on but the flesh of alligators. When they reached the Quinipissas, who had proved hostile on their way down, they resolved to risk an interview with them, in the hope of obtaining food. The treacherous savages dissembled, brought them corn, and on the following night made an attack upon them, but met with a bloody repulse. The party next revisited the Coroas, and found an unfavorable change in their disposition towards them. They feasted them, indeed, but during the repast surrounded them with an overwhelming force of warriors. The French, however, kept so well on their guard, that their entertainers dared not make an attack, and suffered them to depart unmolested.[1]

And now, in a career of unwonted success and anticipated triumph, La Salle was arrested by a foe against which the boldest heart avails nothing. As he ascended the Mississippi, he was seized by a dangerous illness. Unable to proceed, he sent for-

the shore of the Gulf to a little south of the Rio Grande; then runs west, northwest, and finally north, along the range of the Rocky Mountains.

[1] Tonty, 1684, 1693.

ward Tonty to Michilimackinac, whence, after despatching news of their discovery to Canada, he was to return to the Illinois. La Salle himself lay helpless at Fort Prudhomme, the palisade work which his men had built at the Chickasaw Bluffs on their way down. Father Zenobe Membré attended him; and at the end of July he was once more in a condition to advance by slow movements towards Fort Miami, which he reached in about a month.

In September he rejoined Tonty at Michilimackinac, and in the following month wrote to a friend in France: "Though my discovery is made, and I have descended the Mississippi to the Gulf of Mexico, I cannot send you this year either an account of my journey or a map. On the way back I was attacked by a deadly disease, which kept me in danger of my life for forty days, and left me so weak that I could think of nothing for four months after. I have hardly strength enough now to write my letters, and the season is so far advanced that I cannot detain a single day this canoe which I send expressly to carry them. If I had not feared being forced to winter on the way, I should have tried to get to Quebec to meet the new governor, if it is true that we are to have one; but in my present condition this would be an act of suicide, on account of the bad nourishment I should have all winter in case the snow and ice stopped me on the way. Besides, my presence is absolutely necessary in the place to which I am

going. I pray you, my dear sir, to give me once more all the help you can. I have great enemies, who have succeeded in all they have undertaken. I do not pretend to resist them, but only to justify myself, so that I can pursue by sea the plans I have begun here by land."

This was what he had proposed to himself from the first; that is, to abandon the difficult access through Canada, beset with enemies, and open a way to his western domain through the Gulf and the Mississippi. This was the aim of all his toilsome explorations. Could he have accomplished his first intention of building a vessel on the Illinois and descending in her to the Gulf, he would have been able to defray in good measure the costs of the enterprise by means of the furs and buffalo-hides collected on the way and carried in her to France. With a fleet of canoes, this was impossible; and there was nothing to offset the enormous outlay which he and his associates had made. He meant, as we have seen, to found on the banks of the Illinois a colony of French and Indians to answer the double purpose of a bulwark against the Iroquois and a place of storage for the furs of all the western tribes; and he hoped in the following year to secure an outlet for this colony and for all the trade of the valley of the Mississippi, by occupying the mouth of that river with a fort and another colony. This, too, was an essential part of his original design.

But for his illness, he would have gone to France

to provide for its execution. Meanwhile, he ordered Tonty to collect as many men as possible, and begin the projected colony on the banks of the Illinois. A report soon after reached him that those pests of the wilderness the Iroquois were about to renew their attacks on the western tribes. This would be fatal to his plans; and, following Tonty to the Illinois, he rejoined him near the site of the great town.

The cliff called "Starved Rock," now pointed out to travellers as the chief natural curiosity of the region, rises, steep on three sides as a castle wall, to the height of a hundred and twenty-five feet above the river. In front, it overhangs the water that washes its base; its western brow looks down on the tops of the forest trees below; and on the east lies a wide gorge or ravine, choked with the mingled foliage of oaks, walnuts, and elms; while in its rocky depths a little brook creeps down to mingle with the river. From the trunk of the stunted cedar that leans forward from the brink, you may drop a plummet into the river below, where the cat-fish and the turtles may plainly be seen gliding over the wrinkled sands of the clear and shallow current. The cliff is accessible only from behind, where a man may climb up, not without difficulty, by a steep and narrow passage. The top is about an acre in extent. Here, in the month of December, La Salle and Tonty began to intrench themselves. They cut away the forest that crowned the rock, built storehouses and dwellings of

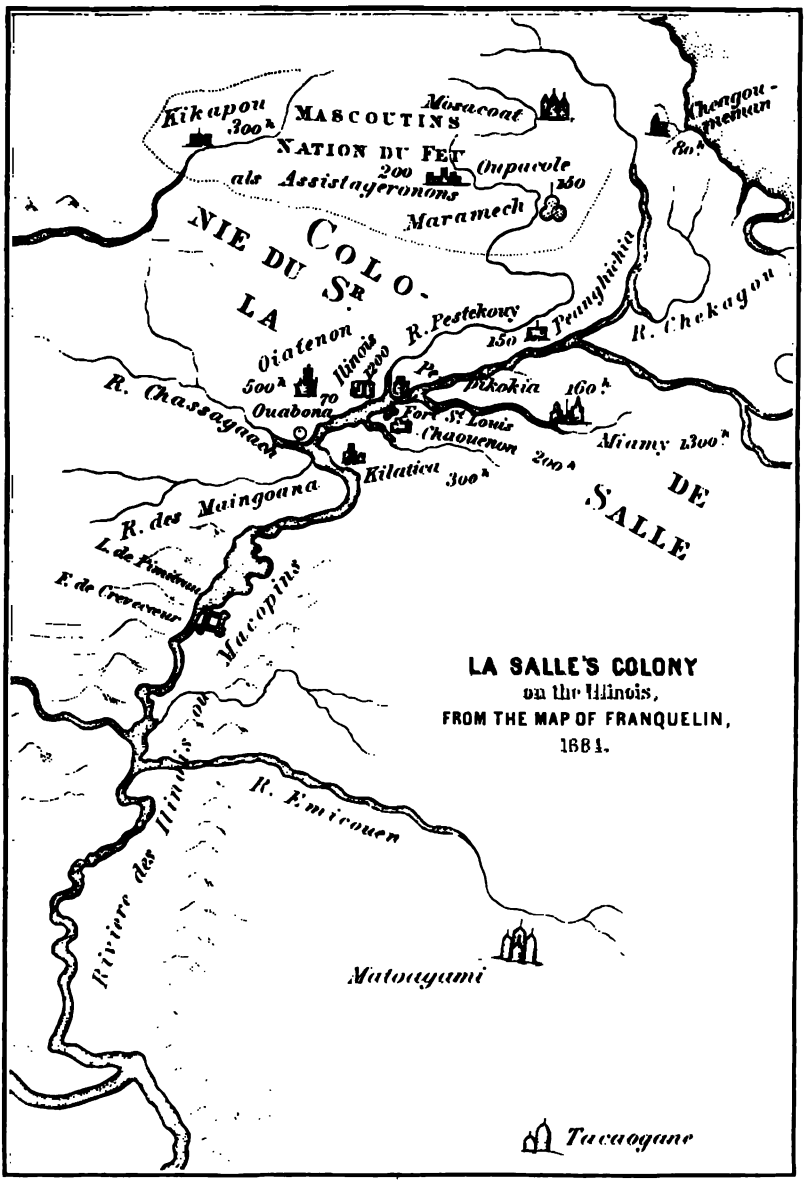
its remains, dragged timber up the rugged pathway, and encircled the summit with a palisade.[1]

Thus the winter passed, and meanwhile the work

[1] "Starved Rock" perfectly answers, in every respect, to the indications of the contemporary maps and documents concerning "Le Rocher," the site of La Salle's fort of St. Louis. It is laid down on several contemporary maps, besides the great map of La Salle's discoveries, made in 1684. They all place it on the south side of the river; whereas Buffalo Rock, three miles above, which has been supposed to be the site of the fort, is on the north. The latter is crowned by a plateau of great extent, is but sixty feet high, is accessible at many points, and would require a large force to defend it; whereas La Salle chose "Le Rocher," because a few men could hold it against a multitude. Charlevoix, in 1721, describes both rocks, and says that the top of Buffalo Rock had been occupied by the Miami village, so that it was known as *Le Fort des Miamis*. This is confirmed by Joutel, who found the Miamis here in 1687. Charlevoix then speaks of "Le Rocher," calling it by that name; says that it is about a league below, on the left or south side, forming a sheer cliff, very high, and looking like a fortress on the border of the river. He saw remains of palisades at the top, which, he thinks, were made by the Illinois (*Journal Historique, Let.* xxvii.), though his countrymen had occupied it only three years before. "The French reside on the rock (Le Rocher), which is very lofty and impregnable." (*Memoir on Western Indians*, 1718, *in N. Y. Col. Docs.*, ix. 890.) St. Cosme, passing this way in 1699, mentions it as "Le Vieux Fort," and says that it is "a rock about a hundred feet high at the edge of the river, where M. de la Salle built a fort, since abandoned." (*Journal de St. Cosme.*) Joutel, who was here in 1687, says, "Fort St. Louis is on a steep rock, about two hundred feet high, with the river running at its base." He adds that its only defences were palisades. The true height, as stated above, is about a hundred and twenty-five feet.

A traditional interest also attaches to this rock. It is said that, in the Indian wars that followed the assassination of Pontiac, a few years after the cession of Canada, a party of Illinois, assailed by the Pottawattamies, here took refuge, defying attack. At length they were all destroyed by starvation, and hence the name of "Starved Rock."

For other proofs concerning this locality, see *ante*, i. 239.



LA SALLE'S COLONY
on the Illinois,
FROM THE MAP OF FRANQUELIN,
1684.

of negotiation went prosperously on. The minds of the Indians had been already prepared. In La Salle they saw their champion against the Iroquois, the standing terror of all this region. They gathered round his stronghold like the timorous peasantry of the middle ages around the rock-built castle of their feudal lord. From the wooden ramparts of St. Louis, — for so he named his fort, — high and inaccessible as an eagle's nest, a strange scene lay before his eye. The broad, flat valley of the Illinois was spread beneath him like a map, bounded in the distance by its low wall of woody hills. The river wound at his feet in devious channels among islands bordered with lofty trees; then, far on the left, flowed calmly westward through the vast meadows, till its glimmering blue ribbon was lost in hazy distance.

There had been a time, and that not remote, when these fair meadows were a waste of death and desolation, scathed with fire, and strewn with the ghastly relics of an Iroquois victory. Now all was changed. La Salle looked down from his rock on a concourse of wild human life. Lodges of bark and rushes, or cabins of logs, were clustered on the open plain or along the edges of the bordering forests. Squaws labored, warriors lounged in the sun, naked children whooped and gambolled on the grass. Beyond the river, a mile and a half on the left, the banks were studded once more with the lodges of the Illinois, who, to the number of six thousand, had returned, since their defeat, to this their favorite dwelling-

place. Scattered along the valley, among the adjacent hills, or over the neighboring prairie, were the cantonments of a half-score of other tribes and fragments of tribes, gathered under the protecting ægis of the French, — Shawanoes from the Ohio, Abenakis from Maine, Miamis from the sources of the Kankakee, with others whose barbarous names are hardly worth the record.[1] Nor were these La Salle's only depend-

[1] This singular extemporized colony of La Salle, on the banks of the Illinois, is laid down in detail on the great map of La Salle's discoveries, by Jean Baptiste Franquelin, finished in 1684. There can be no doubt that this part of the work is composed from authentic data. La Salle himself, besides others of his party, came down from the Illinois in the autumn of 1683, and undoubtedly supplied the young engineer with materials. The various Indian villages, or cantonments, are all indicated, with the number of warriors belonging to each, the aggregate corresponding very nearly with that of La Salle's report to the minister. The Illinois, properly so called, are set down at 1,200 warriors; the Miamis, at 1,300; the Shawanoes, at 200; the Ouiatnoens (Weas), at 500; the Peanqhichia (Piankishaw) band, at 150; the Pepikokia, at 160; the Kilatica, at 300; and the Ouabona, at 70, — in all, 3,880 warriors. A few others, probably Abenakis, lived in the fort.

The Fort St. Louis is placed, on the map, at the exact site of Starved Rock, and the Illinois village at the place where, as already mentioned (see i. 239), Indian remains in great quantities are yearly ploughed up. The Shawanoe camp, or village, is placed on the south side of the river, behind the fort. The country is here hilly, broken, and now, as in La Salle's time, covered with wood, which, however, soon ends in the open prairie. A short time since, the remains of a low, irregular earthwork of considerable extent were discovered at the intersection of two ravines, about twenty-four hundred feet behind, or south of, Starved Rock. The earthwork follows the line of the ravines on two sides. On the east, there is an opening, or gateway, leading to the adjacent prairie. The work is very irregular in form, and shows no trace of the civilized engineer. In the stump of an oak-tree upon it, Dr. Paul counted a

ants. By the terms of his patent, he held seigniorial rights over this wild domain; and he now began to grant it out in parcels to his followers. These, however, were as yet but a score, — a lawless band, trained in forest license, and marrying, as their detractors affirm, a new squaw every day in the week. This was after their lord's departure, for his presence imposed a check on these eccentricities.

La Salle, in a memoir addressed to the Minister of the Marine, reports the total number of the Indians around Fort St. Louis at about four thousand warriors, or twenty thousand souls. His diplomacy had

hundred and sixty rings of annual growth. The village of the Shawanoes (Chaouenons), on Franquelin's map, corresponds with the position of this earthwork. I am indebted to the kindness of Dr. John Paul and Col. D. F. Hitt, the proprietor of Starved Rock, for a plan of these curious remains and a survey of the neighboring district. I must also express my obligations to Mr. W. E. Bowman, photographer at Ottawa, for views of Starved Rock and other features of the neighboring scenery.

An interesting relic of the early explorers of this region was found a few years ago at Ottawa, six miles above Starved Rock, in the shape of a small iron gun, buried several feet deep in the drift of the river. It consists of a welded tube of iron, about an inch and a half in calibre, strengthened by a series of thick iron rings, cooled on, after the most ancient as well as the most recent method of making cannon. It is about fourteen inches long, the part near the muzzle having been burst off. The construction is very rude. Small field-pieces, on a similar principle, were used in the fourteenth century. Several of them may be seen at the Musée d'Artillerie at Paris. In the time of Louis XIV., the art of casting cannon was carried to a high degree of perfection. The gun in question may have been made by a French blacksmith on the spot. A far less probable supposition is, that it is a relic of some unrecorded visit of the Spaniards; but the pattern of the piece would have been antiquated, even in the time of De Soto.

been crowned with a marvellous success, — for which his thanks were due, first to the Iroquois, and the universal terror they inspired; next, to his own address and unwearied energy. His colony had sprung up, as it were, in a night; but might not a night suffice to disperse it?

The conditions of maintaining it were twofold: first, he must give efficient aid to his savage colonists against the Iroquois; secondly, he must supply them with French goods in exchange for their furs. The men, arms, and ammunition for their defence, and the goods for trading with them, must be brought from Canada, until a better and surer avenue of supply could be provided through the entrepôt which he meant to establish at the mouth of the Mississippi. Canada was full of his enemies; but as long as Count Frontenac was in power, he was sure of support. Count Frontenac was in power no longer. He had been recalled to France through the intrigues of the party adverse to La Salle; and Le Febvre de la Barre reigned in his stead.

La Barre was an old naval officer of rank, advanced to a post for which he proved himself notably unfit. If he was without the arbitrary passions which had been the chief occasion of the recall of his predecessor, he was no less without his energies and his talents. He showed a weakness and an avarice for which his age may have been in some measure answerable. He was no whit less unscrupulous than his predecessor in his secret violation of the royal ordi-

nances regulating the fur-trade, which it was his duty to enforce. Like Frontenac, he took advantage of his position to carry on an illicit traffic with the Indians; but it was with different associates. The late governor's friends were the new governor's enemies; and La Salle, armed with his monopolies, was the object of his especial jealousy.[1]

Meanwhile, La Salle, buried in the western wilderness, remained for the time ignorant of La Barre's disposition towards him, and made an effort to secure his good-will and countenance. He wrote to him from his rock of St. Louis, early in the spring of 1683, expressing the hope that he should have from him the same support as from Count Frontenac; "although," he says, "my enemies will try to influence you against me." His attachment to Frontenac, he pursues, has been the cause of all the late governor's enemies turning against him. He then recounts his voyage down the Mississippi; says that, with twenty-two Frenchmen, he caused all the tribes along the river to ask for peace; and speaks of his right under the royal patent to build forts anywhere along his route, and grant out lands around them, as at Fort Frontenac.

[1] The royal instructions to La Barre, on his assuming the government, dated at Versailles, 10 May, 1682, require him to give no further permission to make journeys of discovery towards the Sioux and the Mississippi, as his Majesty thinks his subjects better employed in cultivating the land. The letter adds, however, that La Salle is to be allowed to continue his discoveries, if they appear to be useful. The same instructions are repeated in a letter of the Minister of the Marine to the new intendant of Canada, De Meules.

"My losses in my enterprises," he continues, "have exceeded forty thousand crowns. I am now going four hundred leagues south-southwest of this place, to induce the Chickasaws to follow the Shawanoes and other tribes, and settle, like them, at St. Louis. It remained only to settle French colonists here, and this I have already done. I hope you will not detain them as *coureurs de bois*, when they come down to Montreal to make necessary purchases. I am aware that I have no right to trade with the tribes who descend to Montreal, and I shall not permit such trade to my men; nor have I ever issued licenses to that effect, as my enemies say that I have done."[1]

Again, on the fourth of June following, he writes to La Barre, from the Chicago portage, complaining that some of his colonists, going to Montreal for necessary supplies, have been detained by his enemies, and begging that they may be allowed to return, that his enterprise may not be ruined. "The Iroquois," he pursues, "are again invading the country. Last year, the Miamis were so alarmed by them that they abandoned their town and fled; but at my return they came back, and have been induced to settle with the Illinois at my fort of St. Louis. The Iroquois have lately murdered some families of their nation, and they are all in terror again. I am afraid they will take flight, and so prevent the Missouris and

[1] *Lettre de La Salle à La Barre, Fort St. Louis, 2 Avril*, 1683. The above is condensed from passages in the original.

neighboring tribes from coming to settle at St. Louis, as they are about to do.

"Some of the Hurons and French tell the Miamis that I am keeping them here for the Iroquois to destroy. I pray that you will let me hear from you, that I may give these people some assurances of protection before they are destroyed in my sight. Do not suffer my men who have come down to the settlements to be longer prevented from returning. There is great need here of reinforcements. The Iroquois, as I have said, have lately entered the country; and a great terror prevails. I have postponed going to Michilimackinac, because, if the Iroquois strike any blow in my absence, the Miamis will think that I am in league with them; whereas, if I and the French stay among them, they will regard us as protectors. But, Monsieur, it is in vain that we risk our lives here, and that I exhaust my means in order to fulfil the intentions of his Majesty, if all my measures are crossed in the settlements below, and if those who go down to bring munitions, without which we cannot defend ourselves, are detained under pretexts trumped up for the occasion. If I am prevented from bringing up men and supplies, as I am allowed to do by the permit of Count Frontenac, then my patent from the King is useless. It would be very hard for us, after having done what was required, even before the time prescribed, and after suffering severe losses, to have our efforts frustrated by obstacles got up designedly.

"I trust that, as it lies with you alone to prevent or to permit the return of the men whom I have sent down, you will not so act as to thwart my plans. A part of the goods which I have sent by them belong not to me, but to the Sieur de Tonty, and are a part of his pay. Others are to buy munitions indispensable for our defence. Do not let my creditors seize them. It is for their advantage that my fort, full as it is of goods, should be held against the enemy. I have only twenty men, with scarcely a hundred pounds of powder; and I cannot long hold the country without more. The Illinois are very capricious and uncertain. . . . If I had men enough to send out to reconnoitre the enemy, I would have done so before this; but I have not enough. I trust you will put it in my power to obtain more, that this important colony may be saved."[1]

While La Salle was thus writing to La Barre, La Barre was writing to Seignelay, the Marine and Colonial Minister, decrying his correspondent's discoveries, and pretending to doubt their reality. "The Iroquois," he adds, "have sworn his [La Salle's] death. The imprudence of this man is about to involve the colony in war."[2] And again he

[1] *Lettre de La Salle à La Barre, Portage de Chicagou, 4 Juin,* 1683. The substance of the letter is given above, in a condensed form. A passage is omitted, in which La Salle expresses his belief that his vessel, the "Griffin," had been destroyed, not by Indians, but by the pilot, who, as he thinks, had been induced to sink her, and then, with some of the crew, attempted to join Du Lhut with their plunder, but were captured by Indians on the Mississippi.

[2] *Lettre de La Barre au Ministre, 14 Nov.,* 1682.

writes, in the following spring, to say that La Salle was with a score of vagabonds at Green Bay, where he set himself up as a king, pillaged his countrymen, and put them to ransom, exposed the tribes of the West to the incursions of the Iroquois, and all under pretence of a patent from his Majesty, the provisions of which he grossly abused; but, as his privileges would expire on the twelfth of May ensuing, he would then be forced to come to Quebec, where his creditors, to whom he owed more than thirty thousand crowns, were anxiously awaiting him.[1]

Finally, when La Barre received the two letters from La Salle, of which the substance is given above, he sent copies of them to the Minister Seignelay, with the following comment: "By the copies of the Sieur de la Salle's letters, you will perceive that his head is turned, and that he has been bold enough to give you intelligence of a false discovery, and that, instead of returning to the colony to learn what the King wishes him to do, he does not come near me, but keeps in the backwoods, five hundred leagues off, with the idea of attracting the inhabitants to him, and building up an imaginary kingdom for himself, by debauching all the bankrupts and idlers of this country. If you will look at the two letters I had from him, you can judge the character of this personage better than I can. Affairs with the

[1] *Lettre de La Barre au Ministre*, 30 *Avril*, 1683. La Salle had spent the winter, not at Green Bay, as this slanderous letter declares, but in the Illinois country.

Iroquois are in such a state that I cannot allow him to muster all their enemies together and put himself at their head. All the men who brought me news from him have abandoned him, and say not a word about returning, *but sell the furs they have brought as if they were their own;* so that he cannot hold his ground much longer."[1] Such calumnies had their effect. The enemies of La Salle had already gained the ear of the King; and he had written in August, from Fontainebleau, to his new governor of Canada: "I am convinced, like you, that the discovery of the Sieur de la Salle is very useless, and that such enterprises ought to be prevented in future, as they tend only to debauch the inhabitants by the hope of gain, and to diminish the revenue from beaver-skins."[2]

In order to understand the posture of affairs at this time, it must be remembered that Dutch and English traders of New York were urging on the Iroquois to attack the western tribes, with the object of gaining, through their conquest, the control of the fur-trade of the interior, and diverting it from Montreal to Albany. The scheme was full of danger to Canada, which the loss of the trade would have ruined. La Barre and his associates were greatly alarmed at it. Its complete success would have been fatal to their hopes of profit; but they nevertheless wished it such a measure of success as would ruin their rival, La Salle. Hence, no little satisfaction mingled with

[1] *Lettre de La Barre au Ministre*, 4 *Nov.*, 1683.
[2] *Lettre du Roy à La Barre*, 5 *Août*, 1683.

their anxiety when they heard that the Iroquois were again threatening to invade the Miamis and the Illinois; and thus La Barre, whose duty it was strenuously to oppose the intrigue of the English, and use every effort to quiet the ferocious bands whom they were hounding against the Indian allies of the French, was, in fact, but half-hearted in the work. He cut off La Salle from all supplies; detained the men whom he sent for succor; and, at a conference with the Iroquois, told them that they were welcome to plunder and kill him.[1]

The old governor, and the unscrupulous ring with which he was associated, now took a step to which he was doubtless emboldened by the tone of the King's letter, in condemnation of La Salle's enterprise. He resolved to seize Fort Frontenac, the property of La Salle, under the pretext that the latter had not fulfilled the conditions of the grant, and had not maintained a sufficient garrison.[2] Two of

[1] *Mémoire pour rendre compte à Monseigneur le Marquis de Seignelay de l'État où le Sieur de Lasalle a laissé le Fort Frontenac pendant le temps de sa découverte.* On La Barre's conduct, see "Count Frontenac and New France under Louis XIV.," i. chap. v.

[2] La Salle, when at Mackinaw, on his way to Quebec, in 1682, had been recalled to the Illinois, as we have seen, by a threatened Iroquois invasion. There is before me a copy of a letter which he then wrote to Count Frontenac, begging him to send up more soldiers to the fort, at his (La Salle's) expense. Frontenac, being about to sail for France, gave this letter to his newly arrived successor, La Barre, who, far from complying with the request, withdrew La Salle's soldiers already at the fort, and then made its defenceless state a pretext for seizing it. This statement is made in the memoir addressed to Seignelay, before cited.

his associates, La Chesnaye and Le Ber, armed with an order from him, went up and took possession, despite the remonstrances of La Salle's creditors and mortgagees; lived on La Salle's stores, sold for their own profit, and (it is said) that of La Barre, the provisions sent by the King, and turned in the cattle to pasture on the growing crops. La Forest, La Salle's lieutenant, was told that he might retain the command of the fort if he would join the associates; but he refused, and sailed in the autumn for France.[1]

Meanwhile La Salle remained at the Illinois in extreme embarrassment, cut off from supplies, robbed of his men who had gone to seek them, and disabled from fulfilling the pledges he had given to the surrounding Indians. Such was his position, when reports came to Fort St. Louis that the Iroquois were at hand. The Indian hamlets were wild with terror, beseeching him for succor which he had no power to give. Happily, the report proved false. No Iroquois appeared; the threatened attack was postponed, and the summer passed away in peace. But La Salle's position, with the governor his declared enemy, was intolerable and untenable; and there was no resource but in the protection of the court. Early in the autumn, he left Tonty in command of the rock, bade farewell to his savage retainers, and descended to Quebec, intending to sail for France.

On his way, he met the Chevalier de Baugis, an

[1] These are the statements of the memorial addressed in La Salle's behalf to the minister, Seignelay.

officer of the King's dragoons, commissioned by La Barre to take possession of Fort St. Louis, and bearing letters from the governor ordering La Salle to come to Quebec, — a superfluous command, as he was then on his way thither. He smothered his wrath, and wrote to Tonty to receive De Baugis well. The chevalier and his party proceeded to the Illinois, and took possession of the fort, — De Baugis commanding for the governor, while Tonty remained as representative of La Salle. The two officers could not live in harmony; but, with the return of spring, each found himself in sore need of aid from the other. Towards the end of March the Iroquois attacked their citadel, and besieged it for six days, but at length withdrew discomfited, carrying with them a number of Indian prisoners, most of whom escaped from their clutches.[1]

Meanwhile, La Salle had sailed for France.

[1] Tonty, 1684, 1693; *Lettre de La Barre au Ministre, 5 Juin,* 1684; *Ibid., 9 Juillet,* 1684.

CHAPTER XXII.

1680–1683.

LA SALLE PAINTED BY HIMSELF.

DIFFICULTY OF KNOWING HIM; HIS DETRACTORS; HIS LETTERS; VEXATIONS OF HIS POSITION; HIS UNFITNESS FOR TRADE; RISKS OF CORRESPONDENCE; HIS REPORTED MARRIAGE; ALLEGED OSTENTATION; MOTIVES OF ACTION; CHARGES OF HARSHNESS; INTRIGUES AGAINST HIM; UNPOPULAR MANNERS; A STRANGE CONFESSION; HIS STRENGTH AND HIS WEAKNESS; CONTRASTS OF HIS CHARACTER.

WE have seen La Salle in his acts. While he crosses the sea, let us look at him in himself. Few men knew him, even of those who saw him most. Reserved and self-contained as he was, with little vivacity or gayety or love of pleasure, he was a sealed book to those about him. His daring energy and endurance were patent to all; but the motive forces that urged him, and the influences that wrought beneath the surface of his character, were hidden where few eyes could pierce. His enemies were free to make their own interpretations, and they did not fail to use the opportunity.

The interests arrayed against him were incessantly at work. His men were persuaded to desert and rob him; the Iroquois were told that he was arming

the western tribes against them; the western tribes were told that he was betraying them to the Iroquois; his proceedings were denounced to the court; and continual efforts were made to alienate his associates. They, on their part, sore as they were from disappointment and loss, were in a mood to listen to the aspersions cast upon him; and they pestered him with letters, asking questions, demanding explanations, and dunning him for money. It is through his answers that we are best able to judge him; and at times, by those touches of nature which make the whole world kin, they teach us to know him and to feel for him.

The main charges against him were that he was a crack-brained schemer, that he was harsh to his men, that he traded where he had no right to trade, and that his discoveries were nothing but a pretence for making money. No accusations appear that touch his integrity or his honor.

It was hard to convince those who were always losing by him. A remittance of good dividends would have been his best answer, and would have made any other answer needless; but, instead of bills of exchange, he had nothing to give but excuses and explanations. In the autumn of 1680, he wrote to an associate who had demanded the long-deferred profits: "I have had many misfortunes in the last two years. In the autumn of '78, I lost a vessel by the fault of the pilot; in the next summer, the deserters I told you about robbed me of eight or ten

thousand livres' worth of goods. In the autumn of '79, I lost a vessel worth more than ten thousand crowns; in the next spring, five or six rascals stole the value of five or six thousand livres in goods and beaver-skins, at the Illinois, when I was absent. Two other men of mine, carrying furs worth four or five thousand livres, were killed or drowned in the St. Lawrence, and the furs were lost. Another robbed me of three thousand livres in beaver-skins stored at Michilimackinac. This last spring, I lost about seventeen hundred livres' worth of goods by the upsetting of a canoe. Last winter, the fort and buildings at Niagara were burned by the fault of the commander; and in the spring the deserters, who passed that way, seized a part of the property that remained, and escaped to New York. All this does not discourage me in the least, and will only defer for a year or two the returns of profit which you ask for this year. These losses are no more my fault than the loss of the ship 'St. Joseph' was yours. I cannot be everywhere, and cannot help making use of the people of the country."

He begs his correspondent to send out an agent of his own. "He need not be very *savant*, but he must be faithful, patient of labor, and fond neither of gambling, women, nor good cheer; for he will find none of these with me. Trusting in what he will write you, you may close your ears to what priests and Jesuits tell you.

"After having put matters in good trim for trade I

mean to withdraw, though I think it will be very profitable; for I am disgusted to find that I must always be making excuses, which is a part I cannot play successfully. I am utterly tired of this business; for I see that it is not enough to put property and life in constant peril, but that it requires more pains to answer envy and detraction than to overcome the difficulties inseparable from my undertaking."

And he makes a variety of proposals, by which he hopes to get rid of a part of his responsibility to his correspondent. He begs him again to send out a confidential agent, saying that for his part he does not want to have any account to render, except that which he owes to the court, of his discoveries. He adds, strangely enough for a man burdened with such liabilities, "I have neither the habit nor the inclination to keep books, nor have I anybody with me who knows how." He says to another correspondent, "I think, like you, that partnerships in business are dangerous, on account of the little practice I have in these matters." It is not surprising that he wanted to leave his associates to manage business for themselves: "You know that this trade is good; and with a trusty agent to conduct it for you, you run no risk. As for me, I will keep the charge of the forts, the command of posts and of men, the management of Indians and Frenchmen, and the establishment of the colony, which will remain my property, leaving your agent and mine to

look after our interests, and drawing my half without having any hand in what belongs to you."

La Salle was a very indifferent trader; and his heart was not in the commercial part of his enterprise. He aimed at achievement, and thirsted after greatness. His ambition was to found another France in the West; and if he meant to govern it also, — as without doubt he did, — it is not a matter of wonder or of blame. His misfortune was, that, in the pursuit of a great design, he was drawn into complications of business with which he was ill fitted to grapple. He had not the instinct of the successful merchant. He dared too much, and often dared unwisely; attempted more than he could grasp, and forgot, in his sanguine anticipations, to reckon with enormous and incalculable risks.

Except in the narrative parts, his letters are rambling and unconnected, — which is natural enough, written, as they were, at odd moments, by camp-fires and among Indians. The style is crude; and being well aware of this, he disliked writing, especially as the risk was extreme that his letters would miss their destination. "There is too little good faith in this country, and too many people on the watch, for me to trust anybody with what I wish to send you. Even sealed letters are not too safe. Not only are they liable to be lost or stopped by the way, but even such as escape the curiosity of spies lie at Montreal, waiting a long time to be forwarded."

Again, he writes: "I cannot pardon myself for the

stoppage of my letters, though I made every effort to make them reach you. I wrote to you in '79 (in August), and sent my letters to M. de la Forest, who gave them in good faith to my brother. I don't know what he has done with them. I wrote you another, by the vessel that was lost last year. I sent two canoes, by two different routes; but the wind and the rain were so furious that they wintered on the way, and I found my letters at the fort on my return. I now send you one of them, which I wrote last year to M. Thouret, in which you will find a full account of what passed, from the time when we left the outlet of Lake Erie down to the sixteenth of August, 1680. What preceded was told at full length in the letters my brother has seen fit to intercept."

This brother was the Sulpitian priest, Jean Cavelier, who had been persuaded that La Salle's enterprise would be ruinous, and therefore set himself sometimes to stop it altogether, and sometimes to manage it in his own way. "His conduct towards me," says La Salle, "has always been so strange, through the small love he bears me, that it was clear gain for me when he went away; since while he stayed he did nothing but cross all my plans, which I was forced to change every moment to suit his caprice."

There was one point on which the interference of his brother and of his correspondents was peculiarly annoying. They thought it for their interest that he

should remain a single man; whereas, it seems that his devotion to his purpose was not so engrossing as to exclude more tender subjects. He writes: —

"I am told that you have been uneasy about my pretended marriage. I had not thought about it at that time; and I shall not make any engagement of the sort till I have given you reason to be satisfied with me. It is a little extraordinary that I must render account of a matter which is free to all the world.

"In fine, Monsieur, it is only as an earnest of something more substantial that I write to you so much at length. I do not doubt that you will hereafter change the ideas about me which some persons wish to give you, and that you will be relieved of the anxiety which all that has happened reasonably causes you. I have written this letter at more than twenty different times; and I am more than a hundred and fifty leagues from where I began it. I have still two hundred more to get over, before reaching the Illinois. I am taking with me twenty-five men to the relief of the six or seven who remain with the Sieur de Tonty."

This was the journey which ended in that scene of horror at the ruined town of the Illinois.

To the same correspondent, pressing him for dividends, he says: "You repeat continually that you will not be satisfied unless I make you large returns of profit. Though I have reason to thank you for what you have done for this enterprise, it seems to

me that I have done still more, since I have put everything at stake; and it would be hard to reproach me either with foolish outlays or with the ostentation which is falsely imputed to me. Let my accusers explain what they mean. Since I have been in this country, I have had neither servants nor clothes nor fare which did not savor more of meanness than of ostentation; and the moment I see that there is anything with which either you or the court find fault, I assure you that I will give it up, — for the life I am leading has no other attraction for me than that of honor; and the more danger and difficulty there is in undertakings of this sort, the more worthy of honor I think they are."

His career attests the sincerity of these words. They are a momentary betrayal of the deep enthusiasm of character which may be read in his life, but to which he rarely allowed the faintest expression.

"Above all," he continues, "if you want me to keep on, do not compel me to reply to all the questions and fancies of priests and Jesuits. They have more leisure than I; and I am not subtle enough to anticipate all their empty stories. I could easily give you the information you ask; but I have a right to expect that you will not believe all you hear, nor require me to prove to you that I am not a madman. That is the first point to which you should have attended, before having business with me; and in our long acquaintance, either you must have found me out, or else I must have had long intervals of sanity."

To another correspondent he defends himself against the charge of harshness to his men: "The facility I am said to want is out of place with this sort of people, who are libertines for the most part; and to indulge them means to tolerate blasphemy, drunkenness, lewdness, and a license incompatible with any kind of order. It will not be found that I have in any case whatever treated any man harshly, except for blasphemies and other such crimes openly committed. These I cannot tolerate: first, because such compliance would give grounds for another accusation, much more just; secondly, because, if I allowed such disorders to become habitual, it would be hard to keep the men in subordination and obedience, as regards executing the work I am commissioned to do; thirdly, because the debaucheries, too common with this rabble, are the source of endless delays and frequent thieving; and, finally, because I am a Christian, and do not want to bear the burden of their crimes.

"What is said about my servants has not even a show of truth; for I use no servants here, and all my men are on the same footing. I grant that as those who have lived with me are steadier and give me no reason to complain of their behavior, I treat them as gently as I should treat the others if they resembled them; and as those who were formerly my servants are the only ones I can trust, I speak more openly to them than to the rest, who are generally spies of my enemies. The twenty-two men who deserted and

robbed me are not to be believed on their word, deserters and thieves as they are. They are ready enough to find some pretext for their crime; and it needs as unjust a judge as the intendant to prompt such rascals to enter complaints against a person to whom he had given a warrant to arrest them. But, to show the falsity of these charges, Martin Chartier, who was one of those who excited the rest to do as they did, was never with me at all; and the rest had made their plot before seeing me." And he proceeds to relate, in great detail, a variety of circumstances to prove that his men had been instigated first to desert, and then to slander him; adding, "Those who remain with me are the first I had, and they have not left me for six years."

"I have a hundred other proofs of the bad counsel given to these deserters, and will produce them when wanted; but as they themselves are the only witnesses of the severity they complain of, while the witnesses of their crimes are unimpeachable, why am I refused the justice I demand, and why is their secret escape connived at?

"I do not know what you mean by having popular manners. There is nothing special in my food, clothing, or lodging, which are all the same for me as for my men. How can it be that I do not talk with them? I have no other company. M. de Tonty has often found fault with me because I stopped too often to talk with them. You do not know the men one must employ here, when you

exhort me to make merry with them. They are incapable of that; for they are never pleased, unless one gives free rein to their drunkenness and other vices. If that is what you call having popular manners, neither honor nor inclination would let me stoop to gain their favor in a way so disreputable; and, besides, the consequences would be dangerous, and they would have the same contempt for me that they have for all who treat them in this fashion.

"You write me that even my friends say that I am not a man of popular manners. I do not know what friends they are. I know of none in this country. To all appearance they are enemies, more subtle and secret than the rest. I make no exceptions; for I know that those who seem to give me support do not do it out of love for me, but because they are in some sort bound in honor, and that in their hearts they think I have dealt ill with them. M. Plet will tell you what he has heard about it himself, and the reasons they have to give.[1] I have seen it for a long time; and these secret stabs they give me show it very plainly. After that, it is not surprising that I open my mind to nobody, and distrust everybody. I have reasons that I cannot write.

"For the rest, Monsieur, pray be well assured that the information you are so good as to give me is

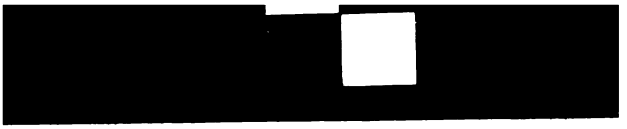
[1] His cousin, François Plet, was in Canada in 1680, where, with La Salle's approval, he carried on the trade of Fort Frontenac, in order to indemnify himself for money advanced. La Salle always speaks of him with esteem and gratitude.

received with a gratitude equal to the genuine friendship from which it proceeds; and, however unjust are the charges made against me, I should be much more unjust myself if I did not feel that I have as much reason to thank you for telling me of them as I have to complain of others for inventing them.

"As for what you say about my look and manner, I myself confess that you are not far from right. But *naturam expellas;* and if I am wanting in expansiveness and show of feeling towards those with whom I associate, *it is only through a timidity which is natural to me, and which has made me leave various employments, where without it I could have succeeded.* But as I judged myself ill-fitted for them on account of this defect, I have chosen a life more suited to my solitary disposition; which, nevertheless, does not make me harsh to my people, though, joined to a life among savages, it makes me, perhaps, less polished and complaisant than the atmosphere of Paris requires. I well believe that there is self-love in this; and that, knowing how little I am accustomed to a more polite life, the fear of making mistakes makes me more reserved than I like to be. So I rarely expose myself to conversation with those in whose company I am afraid of making blunders, and can hardly help making them. Abbé Renaudot knows with what repugnance I had the honor to appear before Monseigneur de Conti; and sometimes it took me a week to make up my mind to go to the audience, — that is, when I had time to think about

myself, and was not driven by pressing business. It is much the same with letters, which I never write except when pushed to it, and for the same reason. It is a defect of which I shall never rid myself as long as I live, often as it spites me against myself, and often as I quarrel with myself about it."

Here is a strange confession for a man like La Salle. Without doubt, the timidity of which he accuses himself had some of its roots in pride; but not the less was his pride vexed and humbled by it. It is surprising that, being what he was, he could have brought himself to such an avowal under any circumstances or any pressure of distress. Shyness; a morbid fear of committing himself; and incapacity to express, and much more to simulate, feeling, — a trait sometimes seen in those with whom feeling is most deep, — are strange ingredients in the character of a man who had grappled so dauntlessly with life on its harshest and rudest side. They were deplorable defects for one in his position. He lacked that sympathetic power, the inestimable gift of the true leader of men, in which lies the difference between a willing and a constrained obedience. This solitary being, hiding his shyness under a cold reserve, could rouse no enthusiasm in his followers. He lived in the purpose which he had made a part of himself, nursed his plans in secret, and seldom asked or accepted advice. He trusted himself, and learned more and more to trust no others. One may fairly infer that distrust was natural to him; but the



inference may possibly be wrong. Bitter experience had schooled him to it; for he lived among snares, pitfalls, and intriguing enemies. He began to doubt even the associates who, under representations he had made them in perfect good faith, had staked their money on his enterprise, and lost it, or were likely to lose it. They pursued him with advice and complaint, and half believed that he was what his maligners called him, — a visionary or a madman. It galled him that they had suffered for their trust in him, and that they had repented their trust. His lonely and shadowed nature needed the mellowing sunshine of success, and his whole life was a fight with adversity.

All that appears to the eye is his intrepid conflict with obstacles without; but this, perhaps, was no more arduous than the invisible and silent strife of a nature at war with itself, — the pride, aspiration, and bold energy that lay at the base of his character battling against the superficial weakness that mortified and angered him. In such a man, the effect of such an infirmity is to concentrate and intensify the force within. In one form or another, discordant natures are common enough; but very rarely is the antagonism so irreconcilable as it was in him. And the greater the antagonism, the greater the pain. There are those in whom the sort of timidity from which he suffered is matched with no quality that strongly revolts against it. These gentle natures may at least have peace, but for him there was no peace.

Cavelier de La Salle stands in history like a statue cast in iron; but his own unwilling pen betrays the man, and reveals in the stern, sad figure an object of human interest and pity.[1]

[1] The following is the character of La Salle, as drawn by his friend, Abbé Bernou, in a memorial to the minister Seignelay: "Il est irréprochable dans ses mœurs, réglé dans sa conduite, et qui veut de l'ordre parmy ses gens. Il est savant, judicieux, politique, vigilant, infatigable, sobre, et intrépide. Il entend suffisament l'architecture civile, militaire, et navale ainsy que l'agriculture; il parle ou entend quatre ou cinq langues des Sauvages, et a beaucoup de facilité pour apprendre les autres. Il sçait toutes leurs manières et obtient d'eux tout ce qu'il veut par son adresse, par son éloquence, et parce qu'il est beaucoup estimé d'eux. Dans ses voyages il ne fait pas meilleure chère que le moindre de ses gens et se donne plus de peine que pas un pour les encourager, et il y a lieu de croire qu'avec la protection de Monseigneur il fondera des colonies plus considérables que toutes celles que les François ont établies jusqu'à présent." — *Mémoire pour Monseigneur le Marquis de Seignelay*, 1682 (Margry, ii. 277).

The extracts given in the foregoing chapter are from La Salle's long letters of 29 Sept., 1680, and 22 Aug., 1682 (1681?). Both are printed in the second volume of the Margry collection, and the originals of both are in the Bibliothèque Nationale. The latter seems to have been written to La Salle's friend, Abbé Bernou; and the former, to a certain M. Thouret.

CHAPTER XXIII.

1684.

A NEW ENTERPRISE.

La Salle at Court: his Proposals. — Occupation of Louisiana. — Invasion of Mexico. — Royal Favor. — Preparation. — A Divided Command. — Beaujeu and La Salle. — Mental Condition of La Salle: his Farewell to his Mother.

When La Salle reached Paris, he went to his old lodgings in Rue de la Truanderie, and, it is likely enough, thought for an instant of the adventures and vicissitudes he had passed since he occupied them before. Another ordeal awaited him. He must confront, not painted savages with tomahawk and knife, but — what he shrank from more — the courtly throngs that still live and move in the pages of Sévigné and Saint-Simon.

The news of his discovery and the rumor of his schemes were the talk of a moment among the courtiers, and then were forgotten. It was not so with their master. La Salle's friends and patrons did not fail him. A student and a recluse in his youth, and a backwoodsman in his manhood, he had what was to him the formidable honor of an interview with royalty itself, and stood with such phi-

losophy as he could command before the gilded arm-chair, where, majestic and awful, the power of France sat embodied. The King listened to all he said; but the results of the interview were kept so secret that it was rumored in the ante-chambers that his proposals had been rejected.[1]

On the contrary, they had met with more than favor. The moment was opportune for La Salle. The King had long been irritated against the Spaniards, because they not only excluded his subjects from their American ports, but forbade them to enter the Gulf of Mexico. Certain Frenchmen who had sailed on this forbidden sea had been seized and imprisoned; and more recently a small vessel of the royal navy had been captured for the same offence. This had drawn from the King a declaration that every sea should be free to all his subjects; and Count d'Estrées was sent with a squadron to the Gulf, to exact satisfaction of the Spaniards, or fight them if they refused it.[2] This was in time of peace. War had since arisen between the two crowns, and brought with it the opportunity of settling the question forever. In order to do so, the minister Seignelay, like his father Colbert, proposed to establish a French port on the Gulf, as a permanent menace to the Spaniards and a basis of future

[1] *Lettres de l'Abbé Tronson*, 8 *Avril*, 10 *Avril*, 1684 (Margry, ii. 354).

[2] *Lettres du Roy et du Ministre sur la Navigation du Golfe du Mexique*, 1669–1682 (Margry, iii. 3–14).

conquest. It was in view of this plan that La Salle's past enterprises had been favored; and the proposals he now made were in perfect accord with it.

These proposals were set forth in two memorials. The first of them states that the late Monseigneur Colbert deemed it important for the service of his Majesty to discover a port in the Gulf of Mexico; that to this end the memorialist, La Salle, made five journeys of upwards of five thousand leagues, in great part on foot; and traversed more than six hundred leagues of unknown country, among savages and cannibals, at the cost of a hundred and fifty thousand francs. He now proposes to return by way of the Gulf of Mexico and the mouth of the Mississippi to the countries he has discovered, whence great benefits may be expected: first, the cause of God may be advanced by the preaching of the gospel to many Indian tribes; and, secondly, great conquests may be effected for the glory of the King, by the seizure of provinces rich in silver mines, and defended only by a few indolent and effeminate Spaniards. The Sieur de la Salle, pursues the memorial, binds himself to be ready for the accomplishment of this enterprise within one year after his arrival on the spot; and he asks for this purpose only one vessel and two hundred men, with their arms, munitions, pay, and maintenance. When Monseigneur shall direct him, he will give the details of what he proposes. The memorial then describes the boundless extent, the fertility and

resources of the country watered by the river Colbert, or Mississippi; the necessity of guarding it against foreigners, who will be eager to seize it now that La Salle's discovery has made it known; and the ease with which it may be defended by one or two forts at a proper distance above its mouth, which would form the key to an interior region eight hundred leagues in extent. "Should foreigners anticipate us," he adds, "they will complete the ruin of New France, which they already hem in by their establishments of Virginia, Pennsylvania, New England, and Hudson's Bay."[1]

The second memorial is more explicit. The place, it says, which the Sieur de la Salle proposes to fortify, is on the river Colbert, or Mississippi, sixty leagues above its mouth, where the soil is very fertile, the climate very mild, and whence we, the French, may control the continent, — since, the river being narrow, we could defend ourselves by means of fire-ships against a hostile fleet, while the position is excellent both for attacking an enemy or retreating in case of need. The neighboring Indians detest the Spaniards, but love the French, having been won over by the kindness of the Sieur de la Salle. We could form of them an army of more than fifteen thousand savages, who, supported by the French and Abenakis, followers of the Sieur de la Salle, could easily subdue the province of New Biscay (the most northern province of Mexico), where there are but

[1] *Mémoire du Sr. de la Salle, pour rendre compte à Monseigneur de Seignelay de la découverte qu'il a faite par l'ordre de sa Majesté.*

four hundred Spaniards, more fit to work the mines than to fight. On the north of New Biscay lie vast forests, extending to the river Seignelay[1] (Red River), which is but forty or fifty leagues from the Spanish province. This river affords the means of attacking it to great advantage.

In view of these facts, pursues the memorial, the Sieur de la Salle offers, if the war with Spain continues, to undertake this conquest with two hundred men from France. He will take on his way fifty buccaneers at St. Domingo, and direct the four thousand Indian warriors at Fort St. Louis of the Illinois to descend the river and join him. He will separate his force into three divisions, and attack at the same time the centre and the two extremities of the province. To accomplish this great design, he asks only for a vessel of thirty guns, a few cannon for the forts, and power to raise in France two hundred such men as he shall think fit, to be armed, paid, and maintained six months at the King's charge. And the Sieur de la Salle binds himself, if the execution of this plan is prevented for more than three years, by peace with Spain, to refund to his Majesty all the costs of the enterprise, on pain of forfeiting the government of the ports he will have established.[2]

[1] This name, also given to the Illinois, is used to designate Red River on the map of Franquelin, where the forests above mentioned are represented.

[2] *Mémoire du Sr. de la Salle sur l'Entreprise qu'il a proposé à Monseigneur le Marquis de Seignelay sur une des provinces de Mexique.*

Such, in brief, was the substance of this singular proposition. And, first, it is to be observed that it is based on a geographical blunder, the nature of which is explained by the map of La Salle's discoveries made in this very year. Here the river Seignelay, or Red River, is represented as running parallel to the northern border of Mexico, and at no great distance from it, — the region now called Texas being almost entirely suppressed. According to the map, New Biscay might be reached from this river in a few days; and, after crossing the intervening forests, the coveted mines of Ste. Barbe, or Santa Barbara, would be within striking distance.[1] That La Salle believed in the possibility of invading the Spanish province of New Biscay from Red River there can be no doubt; neither can it reasonably be doubted that he hoped at some future day to make the attempt; and yet it is incredible that a man in his sober senses could have proposed this scheme with the intention of attempting to execute it at the time and in the manner which he indicates.[2] This memorial bears

[1] Both the memorial and the map represent the banks of Red River as inhabited by Indians, called Terliquiquimechi, and known to the Spaniards as *Indios bravos*, or *Indios de guerra*. The Spaniards, it is added, were in great fear of them, as they made frequent inroads into Mexico. La Salle's Mexican geography was in all respects confused and erroneous; nor was Seignelay better informed. Indeed, Spanish jealousy placed correct information beyond their reach.

[2] While the plan, as proposed in the memorial, was clearly impracticable, the subsequent experience of the French in Texas tended to prove that the tribes of that region could be used with

some indications of being drawn up in order to produce a certain effect on the minds of the King and his minister. La Salle's immediate necessity was to obtain from them the means for establishing a fort and a colony within the mouth of the Mississippi. This was essential to his own plans; nor did he in the least exaggerate the value of such an establishment to the French nation, and the importance of anticipating other powers in the possession of it. But he thought that he needed a more glittering lure to attract the eyes of Louis and Seignelay; and thus, it may be, he held before them, in a definite and tangible form, the project of Spanish conquest which had haunted his imagination from youth, — trusting that the speedy conclusion of peace, which actually took place, would absolve him from the immediate execution of the scheme, and give him time, with the means placed at his disposal, to mature his plans and prepare for eventual action. Such a procedure may be charged with indirectness; but there is a different explanation, which we shall suggest hereafter, and which implies no such reproach.[1]

advantage in attacking the Spaniards of Mexico, and that an inroad on a comparatively small scale might have been successfully made with their help. In 1689, Tonty actually made the attempt, as we shall see, but failed, from the desertion of his men. In 1697, the Sieur de Louvigny wrote to the Minister of the Marine, asking to complete La Salle's discoveries, and invade Mexico from Texas. (*Lettre de M. de Louvigny*, 14 *Oct.*, 1697.) In an unpublished memoir of the year 1700, the seizure of the Mexican mines is given as one of the motives of the colonization of Louisiana.

[1] Another scheme, with similar aims, but much more practicable,

Even with this madcap enterprise lopped off, La Salle's scheme of Mississippi trade and colonization, perfectly sound in itself, was too vast for an individual, — above all, for one crippled and crushed with debt. While he grasped one link of the great chain, another, no less essential, escaped from his hand; while he built up a colony on the Mississippi, it was reasonably certain that evil would befall his distant colony of the Illinois.

The glittering project which he now unfolded found favor in the eyes of the King and his minister; for both were in the flush of an unparalleled success, and looked in the future, as in the past, for nothing but triumphs. They granted more than the petitioner asked, as indeed they well might, if they expected the accomplishment of all that he proposed

was at this very time before the court. Count Peñalossa, a Spanish creole, born in Peru, had been governor of New Mexico, where he fell into a dispute with the Inquisition, which involved him in the loss of property, and for a time of liberty. Failing to obtain redress in Spain, he renounced his allegiance in disgust, and sought refuge in France, where, in 1682, he first proposed to the King the establishment of a colony of French buccaneers at the mouth of Rio Bravo, on the Gulf of Mexico. In January, 1684, after the war had broken out, he proposed to attack the Spanish town of Panuco, with twelve hundred buccaneers from St. Domingo; then march into the interior, seize the mines, conquer Durango, and occupy New Mexico. It was proposed to combine his plan with that of La Salle; but the latter, who had an interview with him, expressed distrust, and showed characteristic reluctance to accept a colleague. It is extremely probable, however, that his knowledge of Peñalossa's original proposal had some influence in stimulating him to lay before the court proposals of his own, equally attractive. Peace was concluded before the plans of the Spanish adventurer could be carried into effect.

to attempt. La Forest, La Salle's lieutenant, ejected from Fort Frontenac by La Barre, was now at Paris; and he was despatched to Canada, empowered to reoccupy, in La Salle's name, both Fort Frontenac and Fort St. Louis of the Illinois. The King himself wrote to La Barre in a strain that must have sent a cold thrill through the veins of that official. "I hear," he says, "that you have taken possession of Fort Frontenac, the property of the Sieur de la Salle, driven away his men, suffered his land to run to waste, and even told the Iroquois that they might seize him as an enemy of the colony." He adds, that, if this is true, La Barre must make reparation for the wrong, and place all La Salle's property, as well as his men, in the hands of the Sieur de la Forest, "as I am satisfied that Fort Frontenac was not abandoned, as you wrote to me that it had been."[1] Four days later, he wrote to the intendant of Canada, Meules, to the effect that the bearer, La Forest, is to suffer no impediment, and that La Barre is to surrender to him without reserve all that belongs to La Salle.[2] Armed with this letter, La Forest sailed for Canada.[3]

[1] *Lettre du Roy à La Barre, Versailles*, 10 *Avril*, 1684.

[2] *Lettre du Roy à De Meules, Versailles*, 14 *Avril*, 1684. Seignelay wrote to De Meules to the same effect.

[3] On La Forest's mission, — *Mémoire pour representer à Monseigneur le Marquis de Seignelay la nécessité d'envoyer le S^r. de la Forest en diligence à la Nouvelle France; Lettre du Roy à La Barre*, 14 *Avril*, 1684; *Ibid.*, 31 *Oct.*, 1684.

There is before me a promissory note of La Salle to La Forest, of 5,200 livres, dated at Rochelle, 17 July, 1684. This seems to be

A chief object of his mission, as it was represented to Seignelay, was, not only to save the colony at the Illinois from being broken up by La Barre, but also to collect La Salle's scattered followers, muster the savage warriors around the rock of St. Louis, and lead the whole down the Mississippi, to co-operate in the attack on New Biscay. If La Salle meant that La Forest should seriously attempt to execute such a scheme, then the charges of his enemies that his brain was turned were better founded than he would have us think.[1]

He had asked for two vessels,[2] and four were given to him. Agents were sent to Rochelle and Rochefort to gather recruits. A hundred soldiers were enrolled, besides mechanics and laborers; and thirty volunteers,

pay due to La Forest, who had served as La Salle's officer for nine years. A memorandum is attached, signed by La Salle, to the effect that it is his wish that La Forest reimburse himself, "*par préférence*," out of any property of his (La Salle's) in France or Canada.

[1] The attitude of La Salle, in this matter, is incomprehensible. In July, La Forest was at Rochefort, complaining because La Salle had ordered him to stay in garrison at Fort Frontenac. *Beaujeu à Villermont*, 10 *July*, 1684. This means an abandonment of the scheme of leading the warriors at the rock of St. Louis down the Mississippi; but, in the next month, La Salle writes to Seignelay that he is afraid La Barre will use the Iroquois war as a pretext to prevent La Forest from making his journey (to the Illinois), and that in this case he will himself try to go up the Mississippi, and meet the Illinois warriors; so that, in five or six months from the date of the letter, the minister will hear of his departure to attack the Spaniards. (*La Salle à Seignelay, Août*, 1684.) Either this is sheer folly, or else it is meant to delude the minister.

[2] *Mémoire de ce qui aura esté accordé au Sieur de la Salle.*

including gentlemen and burghers of condition, joined the expedition. And, as the plan was one no less of colonization than of war, several families embarked for the new land of promise, as well as a number of girls, lured by the prospect of almost certain matrimony. Nor were missionaries wanting. Among them was La Salle's brother, Cavelier, and two other priests of St. Sulpice. Three Récollets were added, — Zenobe Membré, who was then in France, Anastase Douay, and Maxime Le Clerc. The principal vessel was the "Joly," belonging to the royal navy, and carrying thirty-six guns. Another armed vessel of six guns was added, together with a store-ship and a ketch.

La Salle had asked for sole command of the expedition, with a subaltern officer, and one or two pilots to sail the vessels as he should direct. Instead of complying, Seignelay gave the command of the vessels to Beaujeu, a captain of the royal navy, — whose authority was restricted to their management at sea, while La Salle was to prescribe the route they were to take, and have entire control of the troops and colonists on land.[1] This arrangement displeased both parties. Beaujeu, an old and experienced officer, was galled that a civilian should be set over him, — and he, too, a burgher lately ennobled; nor was La Salle the man to soothe his ruffled spirit. Detesting a divided command, cold, reserved, and

[1] *Lettre du Roy à La Salle*, 12 *Avril*, 1684; *Mémoire pour servir d'Instruction au Sieur de Beaujeu*, 14 *Avril*, 1684.

impenetrable, he would have tried the patience of a less excitable colleague. Beaujeu, on his part, though set to a task which he disliked, seems to have meant to do his duty, and to have been willing at the outset to make the relations between himself and his unwelcome associate as agreeable as possible. Unluckily, La Salle discovered that the wife of Beaujeu was devoted to the Jesuits. We have seen the extreme distrust with which he regarded these guides of his youth, and he seems now to have fancied that Beaujeu was their secret ally. Possibly, he suspected that information of his movements would be given to the Spaniards; more probably, he had undefined fears of adverse machinations. Granting that such existed, it was not his interest to stimulate them by needlessly exasperating the naval commander. His deportment, however, was not conciliating; and Beaujeu, prepared to dislike him, presently lost temper. While the vessels still lay at Rochelle; while all was bustle and preparation; while stores, arms, and munitions were embarking; while boys and vagabonds were enlisting as soldiers for the expedition, — Beaujeu was venting his disgust in long letters to the minister.

"You have ordered me, Monseigneur, to give all possible aid to this undertaking, and I shall do so to the best of my power; but permit me to take great credit to myself, for I find it very hard to submit to the orders of the Sieur de la Salle, whom I believe to be a man of merit, but who has no experience of

Marquis de Seignelay.

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Goupil & Cie Paris.

war except with savages, and who has no rank, while I have been captain of a ship thirteen years, and have served thirty by sea and land. Besides, Monseigneur, he has told me that in case of his death you have directed that the Sieur de Tonty shall succeed him. This, indeed, is very hard; for, though I am not acquainted with that country, I should be very dull, if, being on the spot, I did not know at the end of a month as much of it as they do. I beg, Monseigneur, that I may at least share the command with them; and that, as regards war, nothing may be done without my knowledge and concurrence, — for, as to their commerce, I neither intend nor desire to know anything about it."

Seiguelay answered by a rebuff, and told him to make no trouble about the command. This increased his irritation, and he wrote: "In my last letter, Monseigneur, I represented to you the hardship of compelling me to obey M. de la Salle, who has no rank, and *never commanded anybody but school-boys;* and I begged you at least to divide the command between us. I now, Monseigneur, take the liberty to say that I will obey without repugnance, if you order me to do so, having reflected that there can be no competition between the said Sieur de la Salle and me.

"Thus far, he has not told me his plan; and he changes his mind every moment. He is a man so suspicious, and so afraid that one will penetrate his secrets, that I dare not ask him anything. He says

that M. de Parassy, commissary's clerk, with whom he has often quarrelled, is paid by his enemies to defeat his undertaking; and many other things with which I will not trouble you. . . .

"He pretends that I am only to command the sailors, and have no authority over the volunteer officers and the hundred soldiers who are to take passage in the 'Joly;' and that they are not to recognize or obey me in any way during the voyage. . . .

"He has covered the decks with boxes and chests of such prodigious size that neither the cannon nor the capstan can be worked."

La Salle drew up a long list of articles, defining the respective rights and functions of himself and Beaujeu, to whom he presented it for signature. Beaujeu demurred at certain military honors demanded by La Salle, saying that if a marshal of France should come on board his ship, he would have none left to offer him. The point was referred to the naval intendant; and the articles of the treaty having been slightly modified, Beaujeu set his name to it. "By this," he says, "you can judge better of the character of M. de la Salle than by all I can say. He is a man who wants smoke [form and ceremony]. I will give him his fill of it, and, perhaps, more than he likes.

"I am bound to an unknown country, to seek what is about as hard to find as the philosopher's stone. It vexes me, Monseigneur, that you should

have been involved in a business the success of which is very uncertain. M. de la Salle begins to doubt it himself."

While Beaujeu wrote thus to the minister, he was also writing to Cabart de Villermont, one of his friends at Paris, with whom La Salle was also on friendly terms. These letters are lively and entertaining, and by no means suggestive of any secret conspiracy. He might, it is true, have been more reserved in his communications; but he betrays no confidence, for none was placed in him. It is the familiar correspondence of an irritable but not ill-natured veteran, who is placed in an annoying position, and thinks he is making the best of it.

La Salle thought that the minister had been too free in communicating the secrets of the expedition to the naval intendant at Rochefort, and through him to Beaujeu. It is hard to see how Beaujeu was to blame for this; but La Salle nevertheless fell into a dispute with him. "He could hardly keep his temper, and used expressions which obliged me to tell him that I cared very little about his affairs, and that the King himself would not speak as he did. He retracted, made excuses, and we parted good friends. . . .

"I do not like his suspiciousness. I think him a good, honest Norman; but Normans are out of fashion. It is one thing to-day, another to-morrow. It seems to me that he is not so sure about his undertaking as he was at Paris. This morning he

came to see me, and told me he had changed his mind, and meant to give a new turn to the business, and go to another coast. He gave very poor reasons, to which I assented, to avoid a quarrel. I thought, by what he said, that he wanted to find a scapegoat to bear the blame, in case his plan does not succeed as he hopes. For the rest, I think him a brave man and a true; and I am persuaded that if this business fails, it will be because he does not know enough, and will not trust us of the profession. As for me, I shall do my best to help him, as I have told you before; and I am delighted to have him keep his secret, so that I shall not have to answer for the result. Pray do not show my letters, for fear of committing me with him. He is too suspicious already; and never was Norman so Norman as he, which is a great hinderance to business."

Beaujeu came from the same province and calls himself jocularly *un bon gros Normand.* His good-nature, however, rapidly gave way as time went on. "Yesterday," he writes, "this Monsieur told me that he meant to go to the Gulf of Mexico. A little while ago, as I said before, he talked about going to Canada. I see nothing certain in it. It is not that I do not believe that all he says is true; but not being of the profession, and not liking to betray his ignorance, he is puzzled what to do.

"I shall go straight forward, without regarding a thousand whims and *bagatelles.* His continual suspicion would drive anybody mad except a Norman

like me; but I shall humor him, as I have always done, even to sailing my ship on dry land, if he likes."

A few days later, there was an open quarrel. "M. de la Salle came to me, and said, rather haughtily and in a tone of command, that I must put provisions for three months more on board my vessel. I told him it was impossible, as she had more lading already than anybody ever dared to put in her before. He would not hear reason, but got angry and abused me in good French, and found fault with me because the vessel would not hold his three months' provisions. He said I ought to have told him of it before. 'And how would you have me tell you,' said I, 'when you never tell me what you mean to do?' We had still another quarrel. He asked me where his officers should take their meals. I told him that they might take them where he pleased; for I gave myself no trouble in the matter, having no orders. He answered that they should not mess on bacon, while the rest ate fowls and mutton. I said that if he would send fowls and mutton on board, his people should eat them; but, as for bacon, I had often ate it myself. At this, he went off and complained to M. Dugué that I refused to embark his provisions, and told him that he must live on bacon. I excused him as not knowing how to behave himself, having spent his life among school-boy brats and savages. Nevertheless, I offered to him, his brother, and two of his friends, seats at my table and

the same fare as myself. He answered my civility by an impertinence, saying that he distrusted people who offered so much and seemed so obliging. I could not help telling him that I saw he was brought up in the provinces."

This was touching La Salle on a sensitive point. Beaujeu continues: "In fact, you knew him better than I; for I always took him for a gentleman (*honnête homme*). I see now that he is anything but that. Pray set Abbé Renaudot and M. Morel right about this man, and tell them he is not what they take him for. Adieu. It has struck twelve: the postman is just going."

Bad as was the state of things, it soon grew worse. Renaudot wrote to La Salle that Beaujeu was writing to Villermont everything that happened, and that Villermont showed the letters to all his acquaintance. Villermont was a relative of the Jesuit Beschefer; and this was sufficient to suggest some secret machination to the mind of La Salle. Villermont's fault, however, seems to have been simple indiscretion, for which Beaujeu took him sharply to task. "I asked you to burn my letters; and I cannot help saying that I am angry with you, not because you make known my secrets, but because you show letters scrawled in haste, and sent off without being even read over. M. de la Salle not having told me his secret, though M. de Seignelay ordered him to tell me, I am not obliged to keep it, and have as good a right as anybody to make my

conjectures on what I read about it in the *Gazette de Hollande.* Let Abbé Renaudot glorify M. de la Salle as much as he likes, and make him a Cortez, a Pizarro, or an Almagro, — that is nothing to me; but do not let him speak of me as an obstacle in his hero's way. Let him understand that I know how to execute the orders of the court as well as he. . . .

"You ask how I get on with M. de la Salle. Don't you know that this man is impenetrable, and that there is no knowing what he thinks of one? He told a person of note whom I will not name that he had suspicions about our correspondence, as well as about Madame de Beaujeu's devotion to the Jesuits. His distrust is incredible. If he sees one of his people speak to the rest, he suspects something, and is gruff with them. He told me himself that he wanted to get rid of M. de Tonty, who is in America."

La Salle's claim to exclusive command of the soldiers on board the "Joly" was a source of endless trouble. Beaujeu declared that he would not set sail till officers, soldiers, and volunteers had all sworn to obey him when at sea; at which La Salle had the indiscretion to say, "If I am not master of my soldiers, how can I make him [Beaujeu] do his duty in case he does not want to do it?"

Beaujeu says that this affair made a great noise among the officers at Rochefort, and adds: "*There are very few people who do not think that his brain is touched.* I have spoken to some who have known

him twenty years. They all say that he was always rather visionary."

It is difficult not to suspect that the current belief at Rochefort had some foundation; and that the deadly strain of extreme hardship, prolonged anxiety, and alternation of disaster and success, joined to the fever which nearly killed him, had unsettled his judgment and given a morbid development to his natural defects. His universal suspicion, which included even the stanch and faithful Henri de Tonty; his needless provocation of persons whose good-will was necessary to him; his doubts whether he should sail for the Gulf or for Canada, when to sail to Canada would have been to renounce, or expose to almost certain defeat, an enterprise long cherished and definitely planned, — all point to one conclusion. It may be thought that his doubts were feigned, in order to hide his destination to the last moment; but if so, he attempted to blind not only his ill wishers, but his mother, whom he also left in uncertainty as to his route.

Unless we assume that his scheme of invading Mexico was thrown out as a bait to the King, it is hard to reconcile it with the supposition of mental soundness. To base so critical an attempt on a geographical conjecture, which rested on the slightest possible information, and was in fact a total error; to postpone the perfectly sound plan of securing the mouth of the Mississippi, to a wild project of leading fifteen thousand savages for an unknown distance

through an unknown country to attack an unknown enemy, — was something more than Quixotic daring. The King and the minister saw nothing impracticable in it, for they did not know the country or its inhabitants. They saw no insuperable difficulty in mustering and keeping together fifteen thousand of the most wayward and unstable savages on earth, split into a score and more of tribes, some hostile to each other and some to the French; nor in the problem of feeding such a mob, on a march of hundreds of miles; nor in the plan of drawing four thousand of them from the Illinois, nearly two thousand miles distant, though some of these intended allies had no canoes or other means of transportation, and though, travelling in such numbers, they would infallibly starve on the way to the rendezvous. It is difficult not to see in all this the chimera of an overwrought brain, no longer able to distinguish between the possible and the impossible.

Preparation dragged slowly on; the season was growing late; the King grew impatient, and found fault with the naval intendant. Meanwhile, the various members of the expedition had all gathered at Rochelle. Joutel, a fellow-townsman of La Salle, returning to his native Rouen, after sixteen years in the army, found all astir with the new project. His father had been gardener to Henri Cavelier, La Salle's uncle; and being of an adventurous spirit he volunteered for the enterprise, of which he was to become the historian. With La Salle's brother the

priest, and two of his nephews, one of whom was a boy of fourteen, Joutel set out for Rochelle, where all were to embark together for their promised land.[1]

La Salle wrote a parting letter to his mother at Rouen: —

ROCHELLE, 18 July, 1684.

MADAME MY MOST HONORED MOTHER, —

At last, after having waited a long time for a favourable wind, and having had a great many difficulties to overcome, we are setting sail with four vessels, and nearly four hundred men on board. Everybody is well, including little Colin and my nephew. We all have good hope of a happy success. We are not going by way of Canada, but by the Gulf of Mexico. I passionately wish, and so do we all, that the success of this voyage may contribute to your repose and comfort. Assuredly, I shall spare no effort that it may; and I beg you, on your part, to preserve yourself for the love of us.

You need not be troubled by the news from Canada, which are nothing but the continuation of the artifices of my enemies. I hope to be as successful against them as I have been thus far, and to embrace you a year hence with all the pleasure that the most grateful of children can feel with so good a mother as you have always been. Pray let this hope, which shall not disappoint you, support you through whatever trials may happen, and be sure that you will always find me with a heart full of the feelings which are due to you.

[1] Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 12.

Madame my Most Honored Mother, from your most humble and most obedient servant and son,

DE LA SALLE.

My brother, my nephews, and all the others greet you, and take their leave of you.

This memorable last farewell has lain for two hundred years among the family papers of the Caveliers.[1]

[1] The letters of Beaujeu to Seignelay and to Cabart de Villermont, with most of the other papers on which this chapter rests, will be found in Margry, ii. 354–471. This indefatigable investigator has also brought to light a number of letters from a brother officer of Beaujeu, Machaut-Rougemont, written at Rochefort, just after the departure of the expedition from Rochelle, and giving some idea of the views there entertained concerning it. He says: "L'on ne peut pas faire plus d'extravagances que le Sieur de la Salle n'en a fait sur toutes ses prétentions de commandement. Je plains beaucoup le pauvre Beaujeu d'avoir affaire à une humeur si saturnienne. . . . Je le croy beaucoup visionnaire . . . Beaujeu a une sotte commission."

CHAPTER XXIV.

1684, 1685.

THE VOYAGE.

DISPUTES WITH BEAUJEU. — ST. DOMINGO. — LA SALLE ATTACKED WITH FEVER: HIS DESPERATE CONDITION. — THE GULF OF MEXICO. — A VAIN SEARCH AND A FATAL ERROR.

THE four ships sailed from Rochelle on the twenty-fourth of July. Four days after, the "Joly" broke her bowsprit, by design as La Salle fancied. They all put back to Rochefort, where the mischief was quickly repaired; and they put to sea again. La Salle, and the chief persons of the expedition, with a crowd of soldiers, artisans, and women, the destined mothers of Louisiana, were all on board the "Joly." Beaujeu wished to touch at Madeira, to replenish his water-casks. La Salle refused, lest by doing so the secret of the enterprise might reach the Spaniards. One Paget, a Huguenot, took up the word in support of Beaujeu. La Salle told him that the affair was none of his; and as Paget persisted with increased warmth and freedom, he demanded of Beaujeu if it was with his consent that a man of no rank spoke to him in that manner. Beaujeu sus-

tained the Huguenot. "That is enough," returned La Salle, and withdrew into his cabin.[1]

This was not the first misunderstanding; nor was it the last. There was incessant chafing between the two commanders; and the sailors of the "Joly" were soon of one mind with their captain. When the ship crossed the tropic, they made ready a tub on deck to baptize the passengers, after the villanous practice of the time; but La Salle refused to permit it, at which they were highly exasperated, having promised themselves a bountiful ransom, in money or liquor, from their victims. "Assuredly," says Joutel, "they would gladly have killed us all."

When, after a wretched voyage of two months the ships reached St. Domingo, a fresh dispute occurred. It had been resolved at a council of officers to stop at Port de Paix; but Beaujeu, on pretext of a fair wind, ran by that place in the night, and cast anchor at Petit Goave, on the other side of the island. La Salle was extremely vexed; for he expected to meet at Port de Paix the Marquis de Saint-Laurent, lieutenant-general of the islands, Bégon the intendant, and De Cussy, governor of La Tortue, who had orders to supply him with provisions and give him all possible aid.

The "Joly" was alone: the other vessels had lagged behind. She had more than fifty sick men on

[1] *Lettre (sans nom d'auteur) écrite de St. Domingue, 14 Nov.*, 1684 (Margry, ii. 492); *Mémoire autographe de l'Abbé Jean Cavelier sur le Voyage de* 1684. Compare Joutel.

board, and La Salle was of the number. He sent a messenger to Saint-Laurent, Bégon, and Cussy, begging them to come to him; ordered Joutel to get the sick ashore, suffocating as they were in the hot and crowded ship; and caused the soldiers to be landed on a small island in the harbor. Scarcely had the voyagers sung *Te Deum* for their safe arrival, when two of the lagging vessels appeared, bringing tidings that the third, the ketch "St. François," had been taken by Spanish buccaneers. She was laden with provisions, tools, and other necessaries for the colony; and the loss was irreparable. Beaujeu was answerable for it; for had he anchored at Port de Paix, it would not have occurred. The lieutenant-general, with Bégon and Cussy, who presently arrived, plainly spoke their minds to him.[1]

La Salle's illness increased. "I was walking with him one day," writes Joutel, "when he was seized of a sudden with such a weakness that he could not stand, and was obliged to lie down on the ground. When he was a little better, I led him to a chamber of a house that the brothers Duhaut had hired. Here we put him to bed, and in the morning he was attacked by a violent fever."[2] "It was so violent that," says another of his shipmates, "his imagination pictured to him things equally terrible and amazing."[3] He lay delirious in the wretched garret,

[1] *Mémoire de MM. de Saint-Laurens et Bégon* (Margry, ii. 499); Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 28.

[2] *Relation de Henri Joutel* (Margry, iii. 98).

[3] *Lettre (sans nom d'auteur)*, 14 *Nov.*, 1684 (Margry, ii. 496).

attended by his brother, and one or two others who stood faithful to him. A goldsmith of the neighborhood, moved at his deplorable condition, offered the use of his house; and Abbé Cavelier had him removed thither. But there was a tavern hard by, and the patient was tormented with daily and nightly riot. At the height of the fever, a party of Beaujeu's sailors spent a night in singing and dancing before the house; and, says Cavelier, "The more we begged them to be quiet, the more noise they made." La Salle lost reason and well-nigh life; but at length his mind resumed its balance, and the violence of the disease abated. A friendly Capucin friar offered him the shelter of his roof; and two of his men supported him thither on foot, giddy with exhaustion and hot with fever. Here he found repose, and was slowly recovering, when some of his attendants rashly told him the loss of the ketch "St. François;" and the consequence was a critical return of the disease.[1]

There was no one to fill his place. Beaujeu would not; Cavelier could not. Joutel, the gardener's son, was apparently the most trusty man of the company; but the expedition was virtually without a head. The men roamed on shore, and plunged into every excess of debauchery, contracting diseases which eventually killed them.

Beaujeu, in the extremity of ill-humor, resumed

[1] The above particulars are from the memoir of La Salle's brother, Abbé Cavelier, already cited.

his correspondence with Seignelay. "But for the illness of the Sieur de la Salle," he writes, "I could not venture to report to you the progress of our voyage, as I am charged only with the navigation, and he with the secrets; but as his malady has deprived him of the use of his faculties, both of body and mind, I have thought myself obliged to acquaint you with what is passing, and of the condition in which we are."

He then declares that the ships freighted by La Salle were so slow that the "Joly" had continually been forced to wait for them, thus doubling the length of the voyage; that he had not had water enough for the passengers, as La Salle had not told him that there were to be any such till the day they came on board; that great numbers were sick, and that he had told La Salle there would be trouble if he filled all the space between decks with his goods, and forced the soldiers and sailors to sleep on deck; that he had told him he would get no provisions at St. Domingo, but that he insisted on stopping; that it had always been so, — that whatever he proposed La Salle would refuse, alleging orders from the King; "and now," pursues the ruffled commander, "everybody is ill; and he himself has a violent fever, as dangerous, the surgeon tells me, to the mind as to the body."

The rest of the letter is in the same strain. He says that a day or two after La Salle's illness began, his brother Cavelier came to ask him to take charge

of his affairs; but that he did not wish to meddle with them, especially as nobody knows anything about them, and as La Salle has sold some of the ammunition and provisions; that Cavelier tells him that he thinks his brother keeps no accounts, wishing to hide his affairs from everybody; that he learns from buccaneers that the entrance of the Mississippi is very shallow and difficult, and that this is the worst season for navigating the Gulf; that the Spaniards have in these seas six vessels of from thirty to sixty guns each, besides row-galleys; but that he is not afraid, and will perish, or bring back an account of the Mississippi. "Nevertheless," he adds, "if the Sieur de la Salle dies, I shall pursue a course different from that which he has marked out for I do not approve his plans."

"If," he continues, "you permit me to speak my mind, M. de la Salle ought to have been satisfied with discovering his river, without undertaking to conduct three vessels with troops two thousand leagues through so many different climates, and across seas entirely unknown to him. I grant that he is a man of knowledge, that he has reading, and even some tincture of navigation; but there is so much difference between theory and practice, that a man who has only the former will always be at fault. There is also a great difference between conducting canoes on lakes and along a river, and navigating ships with troops on distant oceans."[1]

[1] *Lettre de Beaujeu au Ministre*, 20 *Oct.*, 1684.

While Beaujeu was complaining of La Salle, his followers were deserting him. It was necessary to send them on board ship, and keep them there; for there were French buccaneers at Petit Goave, who painted the promised land in such dismal colors that many of the adventurers completely lost heart. Some, too, were dying. "The air of this place is bad," says Joutel; "so are the fruits; and there are plenty of women worse than either."[1]

It was near the end of November before La Salle could resume the voyage. He was told that Beaujeu had said that he would not wait longer for the store-ship "Aimable," and that she might follow as she could.[2] Moreover, La Salle was on ill terms with Aigron, her captain, who had declared that he would have nothing more to do with him.[3] Fearing, therefore, that some mishap might befall her, he resolved to embark in her himself, with his brother Cavelier, Membré, Douay, and others, the trustiest of his followers. On the twenty-fifth they set sail; the "Joly" and the little frigate "Belle" following. They coasted the shore of Cuba, and landed at the Isle of Pines, where La Salle shot an alligator, which the soldiers ate; and the hunter brought in a wild pig, half of which he sent to Beaujeu. Then they advanced to Cape St. Antoine, where bad weather and contrary winds long detained them. A load of

[1] *Relation de Henri Joutel* (Margry, iii. 105).
[2] *Mémoire autographe de l'Abbé Jean Cavelier.*
[3] *Lettre de Beaujeu au Ministre*, 20 *Oct.*, 1684.

cares oppressed the mind of La Salle, pale and haggard with recent illness, wrapped within his own thoughts, and seeking sympathy from none.

At length they entered the Gulf of Mexico, that forbidden sea whence by a Spanish decree, dating from the reign of Philip II., all foreigners were excluded on pain of extermination.[1] Not a man on board knew the secrets of its perilous navigation. Cautiously feeling their way, they held a north-westerly course, till on the twenty-eighth of December a sailor at the mast-head of the "Aimable" saw land. La Salle and all the pilots had been led to form an exaggerated idea of the force of the easterly currents; and they therefore supposed themselves near the Bay of Appalache, when, in fact, they were much farther westward.

On New Year's Day they anchored three leagues from the shore. La Salle, with the engineer Minet, went to explore it, and found nothing but a vast marshy plain, studded with clumps of rushes. Two days after there was a thick fog, and when at length it cleared, the "Joly" was nowhere to be seen. La Salle in the "Aimable," followed closely by the little frigate "Belle," stood westward along the coast. When at the mouth of the Mississippi in 1682, he had taken its latitude, but unhappily could not determine its longitude; and now every eye on board was strained to detect in the monotonous lines

[1] *Letter of Don Luis de Onis to the Secretary of State* (American State Papers, xii. 27–31).

of the low shore some tokens of the great river. In fact, they had already passed it. On the sixth of January, a wide opening was descried between two low points of land; and the adjacent sea was discolored with mud. "La Salle," writes his brother Cavelier, "has always thought that this was the Mississippi." To all appearance, it was the entrance of Galveston Bay.[1] But why did he not examine it? Joutel says that his attempts to do so were frustrated by the objections of the pilot of the "Aimable," to which, with a facility very unusual with him, he suffered himself to yield. Cavelier declares, on the other hand, that he would not enter the opening because he was afraid of missing the "Joly." But he might have entered with one of his two vessels, while the other watched outside for the absent ship. From whatever cause, he lay here five or six days, waiting in vain for Beaujeu;[2] till, at last, thinking that he must have passed westward, he resolved to follow. The "Aimable" and the "Belle" again spread their sails, and coasted the shores of Texas. Joutel, with a boat's crew, tried to land; but the sand-bars and breakers repelled him. A party of Indians swam out through the surf, and were taken on board; but La Salle could learn nothing from them, as their language was unknown to him.

[1] "La hauteur nous a fait remarquer . . . que ce que nous avions vu le sixième janvier estoit en effet la principale entrée de la rivière que nous cherchions." — *Lettre de La Salle au Ministre*, 4 *Mars*, 1687.

[2] *Mémoire autographe de l'Abbé Cavelier.*

Again Joutel tried to land, and again the breakers repelled him. He approached as near as he dared, and saw vast plains and a dim expanse of forest, buffalo running with their heavy gallop along the shore, and deer grazing on the marshy meadows.

Soon after, he succeeded in landing at a point somewhere between Matagorda Island and Corpus Christi Bay. The aspect of the country was not cheering, with its barren plains, its reedy marshes, its interminable oyster-beds, and broad flats of mud bare at low tide. Joutel and his men sought in vain for fresh water, and after shooting some geese and ducks returned to the "Aimable." Nothing had been seen of Beaujeu and the "Joly;" the coast was trending southward; and La Salle, convinced that he must have passed the missing ship, turned to retrace his course. He had sailed but a few miles when the wind failed, a fog covered the sea, and he was forced to anchor opposite one of the openings into the lagoons north of Mustang Island. At length, on the nineteenth, there came a faint breeze; the mists rolled away before it, and to his great joy he saw the "Joly" approaching.

"His joy," says Joutel, "was short." Beaujeu's lieutenant, Aire, came on board to charge him with having caused the separation, and La Salle retorted by throwing the blame on Beaujeu. Then came a debate as to their position. The priest Esmanville was present, and reports that La Salle seemed greatly perplexed. He had more cause for perplexity than

he knew; for in his ignorance of the longitude of the Mississippi, he had sailed more than four hundred miles beyond it.

Of this he had not the faintest suspicion. In full sight from his ship lay a reach of those vast lagoons which, separated from the sea by narrow strips of land, line this coast with little interruption from Galveston Bay to the Rio Grande. The idea took possession of him that the Mississippi discharged itself into these lagoons, and thence made its way to the sea through the various openings he had seen along the coast, chief among which was that he had discovered on the sixth, about fifty leagues from the place where he now was.[1]

Yet he was full of doubt as to what he should do. Four days after rejoining Beaujeu, he wrote him the

[1] "Depuis que nous avions quitté cette rivière qu'il croyoit infailliblement estre le fleuve Colbert [*Mississippi*] nous avions fait environ 45 lieues ou 50 au plus." (Cavelier, *Mémoire.*) This, taken in connection with the statement of La Salle that this "principale entrée de la rivière que nous cherchions" was twenty-five or thirty leagues northeast from the entrance of the Bay of St. Louis (Matagorda Bay), shows that it can have been no other than the entrance of Galveston Bay, mistaken by him for the chief outlet of the Mississippi. It is evident that he imagined Galveston Bay to form a part of the chain of lagoons from which it is in fact separated. He speaks of these lagoons as "une espèce de baye fort longue et fort large, *dans laquelle le fleuve Colbert se décharge.*" He adds that on his descent to the mouth of the river in 1682 he had been deceived in supposing that this expanse of salt water, where no shore was in sight, was the open sea. *Lettre de La Salle au Ministre*, 4 *Mars*, 1685. Galveston Bay and the mouth of the Mississippi differ little in latitude, though separated by about five and a half degrees of longitude.

strange request to land the troops, that he "might fulfil his commission;" that is, that he might set out against the Spaniards.[1] More than a week passed, a gale had set in, and nothing was done. Then La Salle wrote again, intimating some doubt as to whether he was really at one of the mouths of the Mississippi, and saying that, being sure that he had passed the principal mouth, he was determined to go back to look for it.[2] Meanwhile, Beaujeu was in a state of great irritation. The weather was stormy, and the coast was dangerous. Supplies were scanty; and La Salle's soldiers, still crowded in the "Joly," were consuming the provisions of the ship. Beaujeu gave vent to his annoyance, and La Salle retorted in the same strain.

According to Joutel, he urged the naval commander to sail back in search of the river; and Beaujeu refused, unless La Salle should give the soldiers provisions. La Salle, he adds, offered to supply them with rations for fifteen days; and Beaujeu declared this insufficient. There is reason, however, to believe that the request was neither made by the one nor refused by the other so positively as here appears.

[1] *Lettre de La Salle à Beaujeu*, 23 *Jan.*, 1685 (Margry, ii. 526).

[2] This letter is dated, "De l'emboucheure d'une rivière que *je crois estre* une des descharges du Mississipy" (Margry, ii. 528).

CHAPTER XXV.

1685.

LA SALLE IN TEXAS.

A Party of Exploration — Wreck of the "Aimable." — Landing of the Colonists. — A Forlorn Position. — Indian Neighbors. — Friendly Advances of Beaujeu: his Departure. — A Fatal Discovery.

Impatience to rid himself of his colleague and to command alone no doubt had its influence on the judgment of La Salle. He presently declared that he would land the soldiers, and send them along shore till they came to the principal outlet of the river. On this, the engineer Minet took up the word, — expressed his doubts as to whether the Mississippi discharged itself into the lagoons at all; represented that even if it did, the soldiers would be exposed to great risks; and gave as his opinion that all should reimbark and continue the search in company. The advice was good, but La Salle resented it as coming from one in whom he recognized no right to give it. "He treated me," complains the engineer, "as if I were the meanest of mankind."[1]

[1] *Relation de Minet; Lettre de Minet à Seignelay*, 6 *July*, 1685 (Margry, ii. 591, 602).

He persisted in his purpose, and sent Joutel and Moranget with a party of soldiers to explore the coast. They made their way northeastward along the shore of Matagorda Island, till they were stopped on the third day by what Joutel calls a river, but which was in fact the entrance of Matagorda Bay. Here they encamped, and tried to make a raft of driftwood. "The difficulty was," says Joutel, "our great number of men, and the few of them who were fit for anything except eating. As I said before, they had all been caught by force or surprise, so that our company was like Noah's ark, which contained animals of all sorts." Before their raft was finished, they descried to their great joy the ships which had followed them along the coast.[1]

La Salle landed, and announced that here was the western mouth of the Mississippi, and the place to which the King had sent him. He said further that he would land all his men, and bring the "Aimable" and the "Belle" to the safe harborage within. Beaujeu remonstrated, alleging the shallowness of the water and the force of the currents; but his remonstrance was vain.[2]

The Bay of St. Louis, now Matagorda Bay, forms a broad and sheltered harbor, accessible from the sea by a narrow passage, obstructed by sand-bars and by the small island now called Pelican Island. Boats

[1] Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 68; *Relation* (Margry, iii. 143–146). Compare *Journal d'Esmanville* (Margry, ii. 510).

[2] *Relation de Minet* (Margry, ii. 591).

were sent to sound and buoy out the channel, and this was successfully accomplished on the sixteenth of February. The "Aimable" was ordered to enter; and, on the twentieth, she weighed anchor. La Salle was on shore watching her. A party of men, at a little distance, were cutting down a tree to make a canoe. Suddenly some of them ran towards him with terrified faces, crying out that they had been set upon by a troop of Indians, who had seized their companions and carried them off. La Salle ordered those about him to take their arms, and at once set out in pursuit. He overtook the Indians, and opened a parley with them; but when he wished to reclaim his men, he discovered that they had been led away during the conference to the Indian camp, a league and a half distant. Among them was one of his lieutenants, the young Marquis de la Sablonnière. He was deeply vexed, for the moment was critical; but the men must be recovered, and he led his followers in haste towards the camp. Yet he could not refrain from turning a moment to watch the "Aimable," as she neared the shoals; and he remarked with deep anxiety to Joutel, who was with him, that if she held that course she would soon be aground.

They hurried on till they saw the Indian huts. About fifty of them, oven-shaped, and covered with mats and hides, were clustered on a rising ground, with their inmates gathered among and around them. As the French entered the camp, there was the report

of a cannon from the seaward. The startled savages dropped flat with terror. A different fear seized La Salle, for he knew that the shot was a signal of disaster. Looking back, he saw the "Aimable" furling her sails, and his heart sank with the conviction that she had struck upon the reef. Smothering his distress, — she was laden with all the stores of the colony, — he pressed forward among the filthy wigwams, whose astonished inmates swarmed about the band of armed strangers, staring between curiosity and fear. La Salle knew those with whom he was dealing, and, without ceremony, entered the chief's lodge with his followers. The crowd closed around them, naked men and half-naked women, described by Joutel as of singular ugliness. They gave buffalo meat and dried porpoise to the unexpected guests, but La Salle, racked with anxiety, hastened to close the interview; and having without difficulty recovered the kidnapped men, he returned to the beach, leaving with the Indians, as usual, an impression of good-will and respect.

When he reached the shore, he saw his worst fears realized. The "Aimable" lay careened over on the reef, hopelessly aground. Little remained but to endure the calamity with firmness, and to save, as far as might be, the vessel's cargo. This was no easy task. The boat which hung at her stern had been stove in, — it is said, by design. Beaujeu sent a boat from the "Joly," and one or more Indian pirogues were procured. La Salle urged on his men

with stern and patient energy, and a quantity of gunpowder and flour was safely landed. But now the wind blew fresh from the sea; the waves began to rise; a storm came on; the vessel, rocking to and fro on the sand-bar, opened along her side, and the ravenous waves were strewn with her treasures. When the confusion was at its height, a troop of Indians came down to the shore, greedy for plunder. The drum was beat; the men were called to arms; La Salle set his trustiest followers to guard the gunpowder, in fear, not of the Indians alone, but of his own countrymen. On that lamentable night, the sentinels walked their rounds through the dreary bivouac among the casks, bales, and boxes which the sea had yielded up; and here, too, their fate-hunted chief held his drearier vigil, encompassed with treachery, darkness, and the storm.

Not only La Salle, but Joutel and others of his party, believed that the wreck of the "Aimable" was intentional. Aigron, who commanded her, had disobeyed orders and disregarded signals. Though he had been directed to tow the vessel through the channel, he went in under sail; and though little else was saved from the wreck, his personal property, including even some preserved fruits, was all landed safely. He had long been on ill terms with La Salle.[1]

[1] *Procès Verbal du Sieur de la Salle sur le Naufrage de la Flûte l'Aimable; Lettre de La Salle à Seignelay, 4 Mars*, 1685; *Lettre de Beaujeu à Seignelay, sans date.* Beaujeu did his best to save the

All La Salle's company were now encamped on the sands at the left side of the inlet where the "Aimable" was wrecked.[1] "They were all," says the engineer Minet, "sick with nausea and dysentery. Five or six died every day, in consequence of brackish water and bad food. There was no grass, but plenty of rushes and plenty of oysters. There was nothing to make ovens, so that they had to eat flour saved from the wreck, boiled into messes of porridge with this brackish water. Along the shore were quantities of uprooted trees and rotten logs, thrown up by the sea and the lagoon." Of these, and fragments of the wreck, they made a sort of rampart to protect their camp; and here, among tents and hovels, bales, boxes, casks, spars, dismounted cannon, and pens for fowls and swine, were gathered the dejected men and homesick women who were to seize New Biscay, and hold for France a region large as half Europe. The Spaniards, whom they were to conquer, were they

cargo. The loss included nearly all the provisions, 60 barrels of wine, 4 cannon, 1,620 balls, 400 grenades, 4,000 pounds of iron, 5,000 pounds of lead, most of the tools, a forge, a mill, cordage, boxes of arms, nearly all the medicines, and most of the baggage of the soldiers and colonists. Aigron returned to France in the "Joly," and was thrown into prison, "comme il paroist clairement que cet accident est arrivé par sa faute." — *Seignelay au Sieur Arnoul*, 22 *Juillet*, 1685 (Margry, ii. 604).

[1] A map, entitled *Entrée du Lac où on a laissé le S^r. de la Salle*, made by the engineer Minet, and preserved in the Archives de la Marine, represents the entrance of Matagorda Bay, the camp of La Salle on the left, Indian camps on the borders of the bay, the "Belle" at anchor within, the "Aimable" stranded at the entrance, and the "Joly" anchored in the open sea.

knew not where. They knew not where they were themselves; and for the fifteen thousand Indian allies who were to have joined them, they found two hundred squalid savages, more like enemies than friends.

In fact, it was soon made plain that these their neighbors wished them no good. A few days after the wreck, the prairie was seen on fire. As the smoke and flame rolled towards them before the wind, La Salle caused all the grass about the camp to be cut and carried away, and especially around the spot where the powder was placed. The danger was averted; but it soon became known that the Indians had stolen a number of blankets and other articles, and carried them to their wigwams. Unwilling to leave his camp, La Salle sent his nephew Moranget and several other volunteers, with a party of men, to reclaim them. They went up the bay in a boat, landed at the Indian camp, and, with more mettle than discretion, marched into it, sword in hand. The Indians ran off, and the rash adventurers seized upon several canoes as an equivalent for the stolen goods. Not knowing how to manage them, they made slow progress on their way back, and were overtaken by night before reaching the French camp. They landed, made a fire, placed a sentinel, and lay down on the dry grass to sleep. The sentinel followed their example, when suddenly they were awakened by the war-whoop and a shower of arrows. Two volunteers, Oris and Desloges, were killed on the spot; a third, named Gayen, was severely

wounded; and young Moranget received an arrow through the arm. He leaped up and fired his gun at the vociferous but invisible foe. Others of the party did the same, and the Indians fled.

It was about this time that Beaujeu prepared to return to France. He had accomplished his mission, and landed his passengers at what La Salle assured him to be one of the mouths of the Mississippi. His ship was in danger on this exposed and perilous coast, and he was anxious to find shelter. For some time past, his relations with La Salle had been amicable, and it was agreed between them that Beaujeu should stop at Galveston Bay, the supposed chief mouth of the Mississippi; or, failing to find harborage here, that he should proceed to Mobile Bay, and wait there till April, to hear from his colleague. Two days before the wreck of the "Aimable," he wrote to La Salle: "I wish with all my heart that you would have more confidence in me. For my part, I will always make the first advances; and I will follow your counsel whenever I can do so without risking my ship. I will come back to this place, if you want to know the results of the voyage I am going to make. If you wish, I will go to Martinique for provisions and reinforcements. In fine, there is nothing I am not ready to do: you have only to speak."

La Salle had begged him to send ashore a number of cannon and a quantity of iron, stowed in the "Joly," for the use of the colony; and Beaujeu replies: "I wish very much that I could give you

your iron, but it is impossible except in a harbor; for it is on my ballast, and under your cannon, my spare anchors, and all my stowage. It would take three days to get it out, which cannot be done in this place, where the sea runs like mountains when the slightest wind blows outside. I would rather come back to give it to you, in case you do not send the 'Belle' to Baye du St. Esprit [Mobile Bay] to get it. . . . I beg you once more to consider the offer I make you to go to Martinique to get provisions for your people. I will ask the intendant for them in your name; and if they are refused, I will take them on my own account."[1]

To this La Salle immediately replied: "I received with singular pleasure the letter you took the trouble to write me; for I found in it extraordinary proofs of kindness in the interest you take in the success of an affair which I have the more at heart, as it involves the glory of the King and the honor of Monseigneur de Seignelay. I have done my part towards a perfect understanding between us, and have never been wanting in confidence; but even if I could be so, the offers you make are so obliging that they would inspire complete trust." He nevertheless declines them, — assuring Beaujeu at the same time that he has reached the place he sought, and is in a fair way of success if he can but have the cannon, cannon-balls, and iron stowed on board the "Joly."[2]

[1] *Lettre de Beaujeu à La Salle*, 18 *Fév.*, 1685 (Margry, ii. 542).
[2] *Lettre de La Salle à Beaujeu*, 18 *Fév.*, 1685 (Margry, ii. 546).

Directly after he writes again, "I cannot help conjuring you once more to try to give us the iron." Beaujeu replies: "To show you how ardently I wish to contribute to the success of your undertaking, I have ordered your iron to be got out, in spite of my officers and sailors, who tell me that I endanger my ship by moving everything in the depth of the hold on a coast like this, where the seas are like mountains. I hesitated to disturb my stowage, not so much to save trouble as because no ballast is to be got hereabout; and I have therefore had six cannon, from my lower deck battery, let down into the hold to take the place of the iron." And he again urges La Salle to accept his offer to bring provisions to the colonists from Martinique.

On the next day, the "Aimable" was wrecked. Beaujeu remained a fortnight longer on the coast, and then told La Salle that being out of wood, water, and other necessaries, he must go to Mobile Bay to get them. Nevertheless, he lingered a week more, repeated his offer to bring supplies from Martinique, which La Salle again refused, and at last set sail on the twelfth of March, after a leave-taking which was courteous on both sides.[1]

La Salle and his colonists were left alone. Several of them had lost heart, and embarked for home with Beaujeu. Among these was Minet the engineer, who had fallen out with La Salle, and who when he

[1] The whole of this correspondence between Beaujeu and La Salle will be found in Margry, ii.

reached France was imprisoned for deserting him. Even his brother, the priest Jean Cavelier, had a mind to abandon the enterprise, but was persuaded at last to remain, along with his nephew the hot-headed Moranget, and the younger Cavelier, a mere school-boy. The two Récollet friars, Zenobe Membré and Anastase Douay, the trusty Joutel, a man of sense and observation, and the Marquis de la Sablonnière, a debauched noble whose patrimony was his sword, were now the chief persons of the forlorn company. The rest were soldiers, raw and undisciplined, and artisans, most of whom knew nothing of their vocation. Add to these the miserable families and the infatuated young women who had come to tempt fortune in the swamps and cane-brakes of the Mississippi.

La Salle set out to explore the neighborhood. Joutel remained in command of the so-called fort. He was beset with wily enemies, and often at night the Indians would crawl in the grass around his feeble stockade, howling like wolves; but a few shots would put them to flight. A strict guard was kept; and a wooden horse was set in the enclosure, to punish the sentinel who should sleep at his post. They stood in daily fear of a more formidable foe, and once they saw a sail, which they doubted not was Spanish; but she happily passed without discovering them. They hunted on the prairies, and speared fish in the neighboring pools. On Easter Day, the Sieur le Gros, one of the chief men of the

company, went out after the service to shoot snipes; but as he walked barefoot through the marsh, a snake bit him, and he soon after died. Two men deserted, to starve on the prairie, or to become savages among savages. Others tried to escape, but were caught; and one of them was hung. A knot of desperadoes conspired to kill Joutel; but one of them betrayed the secret, and the plot was crushed.

La Salle returned from his exploration, but his return brought no cheer. He had been forced to renounce the illusion to which he had clung so long, and was convinced at last that he was not at the mouth of the Mississippi. The wreck of the "Aimable" itself was not pregnant with consequences so disastrous.

NOTE. — The conduct of Beaujeu, hitherto judged chiefly by the printed narrative of Joutel, is set in a new and more favorable light by his correspondence with La Salle. Whatever may have been their mutual irritation, it is clear that the naval commander was anxious to discharge his duty in a manner to satisfy Seignelay, and that he may be wholly acquitted of any sinister design. When he left La Salle on the twelfth of March, he meant to sail in search of the Bay of Mobile (Baye du St. Esprit), — partly because he hoped to find it a safe harbor, where he could get La Salle's cannon out of the hold and find ballast to take their place; and partly to get a supply of wood and water, of which he was in extreme need. He told La Salle that he would wait there till the middle of April, in order that he (La Salle) might send the "Belle" to receive the cannon; but on this point there was no definite agreement between them. Beaujeu was ignorant of the position of the bay, which he thought much nearer than it actually was. After trying two days to reach it, the strong head-winds and the discontent of his crew induced him to bear away for Cuba; and after an encounter with pirates and various adventures, he reached France about the first of July. He was coldly received by Seignelay, who wrote to the

intendant at Rochelle: "His Majesty has seen what you wrote about the idea of the Sieur de Beaujeu, that the Sieur de la Salle is not at the mouth of the Mississippi. He seems to found this belief on such weak conjectures that no great attention need be given to his account, especially as *this man* has been prejudiced from the first against La Salle's enterprise." (*Lettre de Seignelay à Arnoul*, 22 *Juillet*, 1685. Margry, ii. 604.) The minister at the same time warns Beaujeu to say nothing in disparagement of the enterprise, under pain of the King's displeasure.

The narrative of the engineer, Minet, sufficiently explains a curious map, made by him, as he says, not on the spot, but on the voyage homeward, and still preserved in the Archives Scientifiques de la Marine. This map includes two distinct sketches of the mouth of the Mississippi. The first, which corresponds to that made by Franquelin in 1684, is entitled "Embouchure de la Rivière comme M. de la Salle la marque dans sa Carte." The second bears the words, "Costes et Lacs par la Hauteur de sa Rivière, comme nous les avons trouvés." These "Costes et Lacs" are a rude representation of the lagoons of Matagorda Bay and its neighborhood, into which the Mississippi is made to discharge, in accordance with the belief of La Salle. A portion of the coast-line is drawn from actual, though superficial, observation. The rest is merely conjectural.

CHAPTER XXVI.

1685–1687.

ST. LOUIS OF TEXAS.

THE FORT. — MISERY AND DEJECTION. — ENERGY OF LA SALLE: HIS JOURNEY OF EXPLORATION. — ADVENTURES AND ACCIDENTS. — THE BUFFALO. — DUHAUT. — INDIAN MASSACRE. — RETURN OF LA SALLE. — A NEW CALAMITY. — A DESPERATE RESOLUTION. — DEPARTURE FOR CANADA. — WRECK OF THE "BELLE." — MARRIAGE. — SEDITION. — ADVENTURES OF LA SALLE'S PARTY. — THE CENIS. — THE CAMANCHES. — THE ONLY HOPE. — THE LAST FAREWELL.

OF what avail to plant a colony by the mouth of a petty Texan river? The Mississippi was the life of the enterprise, the condition of its growth and of its existence. Without it, all was futile and meaningless, — a folly and a ruin. Cost what it might, the Mississippi must be found.

But the demands of the hour were imperative. The hapless colony, cast ashore like a wreck on the sands of Matagorda Bay, must gather up its shattered resources and recruit its exhausted strength, before it essayed anew its pilgrimage to the "fatal river." La Salle during his explorations had found a spot which he thought well fitted for a temporary establishment. It was on the river which he named the

La Vache,[1] now the Lavaca, which enters the head of Matagorda Bay; and thither he ordered all the women and children, and most of the men, to remove; while the rest, thirty in number, remained with Joutel at the fort near the mouth of the bay. Here they spent their time in hunting, fishing, and squaring the logs of drift-wood which the sea washed up in abundance, and which La Salle proposed to use in building his new station on the Lavaca. Thus the time passed till midsummer, when Joutel received orders to abandon his post, and rejoin the main body of the colonists. To this end, the little frigate "Belle" was sent down the bay. She was a gift from the King to La Salle, who had brought her safely over the bar, and regarded her as a mainstay of his hopes. She now took on board the stores and some of the men, while Joutel with the rest followed along shore to the post on the Lavaca. Here he found a state of things that was far from cheering. Crops had been sown, but the drought and the cattle had nearly destroyed them. The colonists were lodged under tents and hovels; and the only solid structure was a small square enclosure of pickets, in which the gunpowder and the brandy were stored. The site was good, a rising ground by the river; but there was no wood within the distance of a league, and no horses or oxen to drag it. Their work must be done by men. Some felled and squared the timber; and others dragged it by main force over the

[1] Called by Joutel, Rivière aux Bœufs.

matted grass of the prairie, under the scorching Texan sun. The gun-carriages served to make the task somewhat easier; yet the strongest men soon gave out under it. Joutel went down to the first fort, made a raft and brought up the timber collected there, which proved a most seasonable and useful supply. Palisades and buildings began to rise. The men labored without spirit, yet strenuously; for they labored under the eye of La Salle. The carpenters brought from Rochelle proved worthless; and he himself made the plans of the work, marked out the tenons and mortises, and directed the whole.[1]

Death, meanwhile, made withering havoc among his followers; and under the sheds and hovels that shielded them from the sun lay a score of wretches slowly wasting away with the diseases contracted at St. Domingo. Of the soldiers enlisted for the expedition by La Salle's agents, many are affirmed to have spent their lives in begging at the church doors of Rochefort, and were consequently incapable of discipline. It was impossible to prevent either them or the sailors from devouring persimmons and other wild fruits to a destructive excess. Nearly all fell ill; and before the summer had passed, the graveyard had more than thirty tenants.[2] The bearing of La Salle did not aid to raise the drooping spirits of his

[1] Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 108; *Relation* (Margry, iii. 174); *Procès Verbal fait au poste de St. Louis, le* 18 *Avril*, 1686.

[2] Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 109. Le Clerc, who was not present, says a hundred.

followers. The results of the enterprise had been far different from his hopes; and, after a season of flattering promise, he had entered again on those dark and obstructed paths which seemed his destined way of life. The present was beset with trouble; the future, thick with storms. The consciousness quickened his energies; but it made him stern, harsh, and often unjust to those beneath him.

Joutel was returning to camp one afternoon with the master-carpenter, when they saw game; and the carpenter went after it. He was never seen again. Perhaps he was lost on the prairie, perhaps killed by Indians. He knew little of his trade, but they nevertheless had need of him. Le Gros, a man of character and intelligence, suffered more and more from the bite of the snake received in the marsh on Easter Day. The injured limb was amputated, and he died. La Salle's brother, the priest, lay ill; and several others among the chief persons of the colony were in the same condition.

Meanwhile, the work was urged on. A large building was finished, constructed of timber, roofed with boards and raw hides, and divided into apartments for lodging and other uses. La Salle gave the new establishment his favorite name of Fort St. Louis, and the neighboring bay was also christened after the royal saint.[1] The scene was not without

[1] The Bay of St. Louis, St. Bernard's Bay, or Matagorda Bay, — for it has borne all these names, — was also called Espiritu Santo Bay by the Spaniards, in common with several other bays in the Gulf of Mexico. An adjoining bay still retains the name.

its charms. Towards the southeast stretched the bay with its bordering meadows; and on the northeast the Lavaca ran along the base of green declivities. Around, far and near, rolled a sea of prairie, with distant forests, dim in the summer haze. At times, it was dotted with the browsing buffalo, not yet scared from their wonted pastures; and the grassy swells were spangled with the flowers for which Texas is renowned, and which now form the gay ornaments of our gardens.

And now, the needful work accomplished, and the colony in some measure housed and fortified, its indefatigable chief prepared to renew his quest of the "fatal river," as Joutel repeatedly calls it. Before his departure he made some preliminary explorations, in the course of which, according to the report of his brother the priest, he found evidence that the Spaniards had long before had a transient establishment at a spot about fifteen leagues from Fort St. Louis.[1]

[1] Cavelier, in his report to the minister, says: "We reached a large village, enclosed with a kind of wall made of clay and sand, and fortified with little towers at intervals, where we found the arms of Spain engraved on a plate of copper, with the date of 1588, attached to a stake. The inhabitants gave us a kind welcome, and showed us some hammers and an anvil, two small pieces of iron cannon, a small brass culverin, some pike-heads, some old sword-blades, and some books of Spanish comedy; and thence they guided us to a little hamlet of fishermen, about two leagues distant, where they showed us a second stake, also with the arms of Spain, and a few old chimneys. All this convinced us that the Spaniards had formerly been here." (Cavelier, *Relation du Voyage que mon frère entreprit pour découvrir l'embouchure du fleuve de Missisipy.*)

It was the last day of October when La Salle set out on his great journey of exploration. His brother Cavelier, who had now recovered, accompanied him with fifty men; and five cannon-shot from the fort saluted them as they departed. They were lightly equipped; but some of them wore corselets made of staves, to ward off arrows. Descending the Lavaca, they pursued their course eastward on foot along the margin of the bay, while Joutel remained in command of the fort. It was two leagues above the mouth of the river; and in it were thirty-four persons, including three Récollet friars, a number of women and girls from Paris, and two young orphan daughters of one Talon, a Canadian, who had lately died. Their live-stock consisted of some hogs and a litter of eight pigs, which, as Joutel does not forget to inform us, passed their time in wallowing in the ditch of the palisade; a cock and hen, with a young family; and a pair of goats, which, in a temporary dearth of fresh meat, were sacrificed to the needs of the invalid Abbé Cavelier. Joutel suffered no man to lie idle. The blacksmith, having no anvil, was supplied with a cannon as a substitute. Lodgings were built for the women and girls, and separate lodgings for the men. A small chapel was afterwards added, and the whole was fenced with a

The above is translated from the original draft of Cavelier, which is in my possession. It was addressed to the colonial minister, after the death of La Salle. The statement concerning the Spaniards needs confirmation.

palisade. At the four corners of the house were mounted eight pieces of cannon, which, in the absence of balls, were loaded with bags of bullets.[1] Between the palisades and the stream lay a narrow strip of marsh, the haunt of countless birds; and at a little distance it deepened into pools full of fish. All the surrounding prairies swarmed with game,—buffalo, deer, hares, turkeys, ducks, geese, swans, plover, snipe, and grouse. The river supplied the colonists with turtles, and the bay with oysters. Of these last, they often found more than they wanted; for when in their excursions they shoved their log canoes into the water, wading shoeless through the deep, tenacious mud, the sharp shells would cut their feet like knives; "and what was worse," says Joutel, "the salt water came into the gashes, and made them smart atrociously."

He sometimes amused himself with shooting alligators. "I never spared them when I met them near the house. One day I killed an extremely large one, which was nearly four feet and a half in girth, and about twenty feet long." He describes with accuracy that curious native of the southwestern plains, the "horned frog," which, deceived by its uninviting appearance, he erroneously supposed to be venomous. "We had some of our animals bitten by snakes; among the others, a bitch that had belonged to the

[1] Compare Joutel with the Spanish account in *Carta en que se da noticia de un viaje hecho á la Bahia de Espíritu Santo y de la poblacion que tenian ahi los Franceses; Coleccion de Varios Documentos*, 25.

deceased Sieur le Gros. She was bitten in the jaw when she was with me, as I was fishing by the shore of the bay. I gave her a little theriac [an antidote then in vogue], which cured her, as it did one of our sows, which came home one day with her head so swelled that she could hardly hold it up. Thinking it must be some snake that had bitten her, I gave her a dose of the theriac mixed with meal and water." The patient began to mend at once. "I killed a good many rattle-snakes by means of the aforesaid bitch, for when she saw one she would bark around him, sometimes for a half hour together, till I took my gun and shot him. I often found them in the bushes, making a noise with their tails. When I had killed them, our hogs ate them." He devotes many pages to the plants and animals of the neighborhood, most of which may easily be recognized from his description.

With the buffalo, which he calls "our daily bread," his experiences were many and strange. Being, like the rest of the party, a novice in the art of shooting them, he met with many disappointments. Once, having mounted to the roof of the large house in the fort, he saw a dark moving object on a swell of the prairie three miles off; and rightly thinking that it was a herd of buffalo, he set out with six or seven men to try to kill some of them. After a while, he discovered two bulls lying in a hollow; and signing to the rest of his party to keep quiet, he made his approach, gun in hand. The bulls presently jumped

up, and stared through their manes at the intruder. Joutel fired. It was a close shot; but the bulls merely shook their shaggy heads, wheeled about, and galloped heavily away. The same luck attended him the next day. "We saw plenty of buffalo. I approached several bands of them, and fired again and again, but could not make one of them fall." He had not yet learned that a buffalo rarely falls at once, unless hit in the spine. He continues: "I was not discouraged; and after approaching several more bands, — which was hard work, because I had to crawl on the ground, so as not to be seen, — I found myself in a herd of five or six thousand, but, to my great vexation, I could not bring one of them down. They all ran off to the right and left. It was near night, and I had killed nothing. Though I was very tired, I tried again, approached another band, and fired a number of shots; but not a buffalo would fall. The skin was off my knees with crawling. At last, as I was going back to rejoin our men, I saw a buffalo lying on the ground. I went towards it, and saw that it was dead. I examined it, and found that the bullet had gone in near the shoulder. Then I found others dead like the first. I beckoned the men to come on, and we set to work to cut up the meat, — a task which was new to us all." It would be impossible to write a more true and characteristic sketch of the experience of a novice in shooting buffalo on foot. A few days after, he went out again, with Father Anastase Douay; approached a

bull, fired, and broke his shoulder. The bull hobbled off on three legs. Douay ran in his cassock to head him back, while Joutel reloaded his gun; upon which the enraged beast butted at the missionary, and knocked him down. He very narrowly escaped with his life. "There was another missionary," pursues Joutel, "named Father Maxime Le Clerc, who was very well fitted for such an undertaking as ours, because he was equal to anything, even to butchering a buffalo; and as I said before that every one of us must lend a hand, because we were too few for anybody to be waited upon, I made the women, girls, and children do their part, as well as him; for as they all wanted to eat, it was fair that they all should work." He had a scaffolding built near the fort, and set them to smoking buffalo meat, against a day of scarcity.[1]

Thus the time passed till the middle of January; when late one evening, as all were gathered in the principal building, conversing perhaps, or smoking, or playing at cards, or dozing by the fire in homesick dreams of France, a man on guard came in to report that he had heard a voice from the river. They all went down to the bank, and descried a man in a canoe, who called out, "Dominic!" This was the name of the younger of the two brothers Duhaut, who was one of Joutel's followers. As the canoe

[1] For the above incidents of life at Fort St. Louis, see Joutel, *Relation* (Margry, iii. 185–218, *passim*). The printed condensation of the narrative omits most of these particulars.

approached, they recognized the elder, who had gone with La Salle on his journey of discovery, and who was perhaps the greatest villain of the company. Joutel was much perplexed. La Salle had ordered him to admit nobody into the fort without a pass and a watchword. Duhaut, when questioned, said that he had none, but told at the same time so plausible a story that Joutel no longer hesitated to receive him. As La Salle and his men were pursuing their march along the prairie, Duhaut, who was in the rear, had stopped to mend his moccasins, and when he tried to overtake the party, had lost his way, mistaking a buffalo-path for the trail of his companions. At night he fired his gun as a signal, but there was no answering shot. Seeing no hope of rejoining them, he turned back for the fort, found one of the canoes which La Salle had hidden at the shore, paddled by night and lay close by day, shot turkeys, deer, and buffalo for food, and, having no knife, cut the meat with a sharp flint, till after a month of excessive hardship he reached his destination. As the inmates of Fort St. Louis gathered about the weather-beaten wanderer, he told them dreary tidings. The pilot of the "Belle," such was his story, had gone with five men to sound along the shore, by order of La Salle, who was then encamped in the neighborhood with his party of explorers. The boat's crew, being overtaken by the night, had rashly bivouacked on the beach without setting a guard; and as they slept, a band of Indians had rushed in

upon them, and butchered them all. La Salle, alarmed by their long absence, had searched along the shore, and at length found their bodies scattered about the sands and half-devoured by wolves.[1] Well would it have been, if Duhaut had shared their fate.

Weeks and months dragged on, when, at the end of March, Joutel, chancing to mount on the roof of one of the buildings, saw seven or eight men approaching over the prairie. He went out to meet them with an equal number, well armed; and as he drew near recognized, with mixed joy and anxiety, La Salle and some of those who had gone with him. His brother Cavelier was at his side, with his cassock so tattered that, says Joutel, "there was hardly a piece left large enough to wrap a farthing's worth of salt. He had an old cap on his head, having lost his hat by the way. The rest were in no better plight, for their shirts were all in rags. Some of them carried loads of meat, because M. de la Salle was afraid that we might not have killed any buffalo. We met with great joy and many embraces. After our greetings were over, M. de la Salle, seeing Duhaut, asked me in an angry tone how it was that

[1] Joutel, *Relation* (Margry, iii. 206). Compare Le Clerc, ii. 296. Cavelier, always disposed to exaggerate, says that ten men were killed. La Salle had previously had encounters with the Indians, and punished them severely for the trouble they had given his men. Le Clerc says of the principal fight: "Several Indians were wounded, a few were killed, and others made prisoners, — one of whom, a girl of three or four years, was baptized, and died a few days after, as the first-fruit of this mission, and a sure conquest sent to heaven."

I had received this man who had abandoned him. I told him how it had happened, and repeated Duhaut's story. Duhaut defended himself, and M. de la Salle's anger was soon over. We went into the house, and refreshed ourselves with some bread and brandy, as there was no wine left."[1]

La Salle and his companions told their story. They had wandered on through various savage tribes, with whom they had more than one encounter, scattering them like chaff by the terror of their fire-arms. At length they found a more friendly band, and learned much touching the Spaniards, who, they were told, were universally hated by the tribes of that country. It would be easy, said their informants, to gather a host of warriors and lead them over the Rio Grande; but La Salle was in no condition for attempting conquests, and the tribes in whose alliance he had trusted had, a few days before, been at blows with him. The invasion of New Biscay must be postponed to a more propitious day. Still advancing, he came to a large river, which he at first mistook for the Mississippi; and building a fort of palisades, he left here several of his men.[2] The fate of these unfortunates does not appear. He

[1] Joutel, *Relation* (Margry, iii. 219).

[2] Cavelier says that he actually reached the Mississippi; but, on the one hand, the abbé did not know whether the river in question was the Mississippi or not; and, on the other, he is somewhat inclined to mendacity. Le Clerc says that La Salle thought he had found the river. According to the *Procès Verbal* of 18 April, 1686, "il y arriva le 13 Février." Joutel says that La Salle told him "qu'il n'avoit point trouvé sa rivière."

now retraced his steps towards Fort St. Louis, and, as he approached it, detached some of his men to look for his vessel, the "Belle," for whose safety, since the loss of her pilot, he had become very anxious.

On the next day these men appeared at the fort, with downcast looks. They had not found the "Belle" at the place where she had been ordered to remain, nor were any tidings to be heard of her. From that hour, the conviction that she was lost possessed the mind of La Salle. Surrounded as he was, and had always been, with traitors, the belief now possessed him that her crew had abandoned the colony, and made sail for the West Indies or for France. The loss was incalculable. He had relied on this vessel to transport the colonists to the Mississippi, as soon as its exact position could be ascertained; and thinking her a safer place of deposit than the fort, he had put on board of her all his papers and personal baggage, besides a great quantity of stores, ammunition, and tools.[1] In truth, she was of the last necessity to the unhappy exiles, and their only resource for escape from a position which was fast becoming desperate.

La Salle, as his brother tells us, now fell dangerously ill, — the fatigues of his journey, joined to the effects upon his mind of this last disaster, having overcome his strength, though not his fortitude. "In truth," writes the priest, "after the loss of the

[1] *Procès Verbal fait au poste de St. Louis, le* 18 *Avril,* 1686.

vessel which deprived us of our only means of returning to France, we had no resource but in the firm guidance of my brother, whose death each of us would have regarded as his own."[1]

La Salle no sooner recovered than he embraced a resolution which could be the offspring only of a desperate necessity. He determined to make his way by the Mississippi and the Illinois to Canada, whence he might bring succor to the colonists, and send a report of their condition to France. The attempt was beset with uncertainties and dangers. The Mississippi was first to be found, then followed through all the perilous monotony of its interminable windings to a goal which was to be but the starting-point of a new and not less arduous journey. Cavelier his brother, Moranget his nephew, the friar Anastase Douay, and others to the number of twenty, were chosen to accompany him. Every corner of the magazine was ransacked for an outfit. Joutel generously gave up the better part of his wardrobe to La Salle and his two relatives. Duhaut, who had saved his baggage from the wreck of the "Aimable," was required to contribute to the necessities of the party; and the scantily-furnished chests of those who had died were used to supply the wants of the living. Each man labored with needle and awl to patch his failing garments, or supply their place with buffalo or deer skins. On the twenty-second of April, after

[1] Cavelier, *Relation du Voyage pour découvrir l'Embouchure du Fleuve de Missisipy.*

mass and prayers in the chapel, they issued from the gate, each bearing his pack and his weapons, some with kettles slung at their backs, some with axes, some with gifts for Indians. In this guise, they held their way in silence across the prairie; while anxious eyes followed them from the palisades of St. Louis, whose inmates, not excepting Joutel himself, seem to have been ignorant of the extent and difficulty of the undertaking.[1]

"On May Day," he writes, "at about two in the afternoon, as I was walking near the house, I heard a voice from the river below, crying out several times, *Qui vive?* Knowing that the Sieur Barbier had gone that way with two canoes to hunt buffalo, I thought that it might be one of these canoes coming back with meat, and did not think much of the matter till I heard the same voice again. I answered, *Versailles*, which was the password I had given the Sieur Barbier, in case he should come back in the night. But, as I was going towards the bank, I heard other voices which I had not heard for a long time. I recognized among the rest that of M. Chefdeville, which made me fear that some disaster had happened. I ran down to the bank, and my first greeting was to ask what had become of the 'Belle.'

[1] Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 140; Anastase Douay in Le Clerc, ii. 303; Cavelier, *Relation*. The date is from Douay. It does not appear, from his narrative, that they meant to go farther than the Illinois. Cavelier says that after resting here they were to go to Canada. Joutel supposed that they would go only to the Illinois. La Salle seems to have been even more reticent than usual.

They answered that she was wrecked on the other side of the bay, and that all on board were drowned except the six who were in the canoe; namely, the Sieur Chefdeville, the Marquis de la Sablonnière, the man named Teissier, a soldier, a girl, and a little boy."[1]

From the young priest Chefdeville, Joutel learned the particulars of the disaster. Water had failed on board the "Belle;" a boat's crew of five men had gone in quest of it; the wind rose, their boat was swamped, and they were all drowned. Those who remained had now no means of going ashore; but if they had no water, they had wine and brandy in abundance, and Teissier, the master of the vessel, was drunk every day. After a while they left their moorings, and tried to reach the fort; but they were few, weak, and unskilful. A violent north wind drove them on a sand-bar. Some of them were drowned in trying to reach land on a raft. Others were more successful; and, after a long delay, they found a stranded canoe, in which they made their way to St. Louis, bringing with them some of La Salle's papers and baggage saved from the wreck.

These multiplied disasters bore hard on the spirits of the colonists; and Joutel, like a good commander as he was, spared no pains to cheer them. "We did what we could to amuse ourselves and drive away care. I encouraged our people to dance and sing in the evenings; for when M. de la Salle was among

[1] Joutel, *Relation* (Margry, iii. 226).

us, pleasure was often banished. Now, there is no use in being melancholy on such occasions. It is true that M. de la Salle had no great cause for merry-making, after all his losses and disappointments; but his troubles made others suffer also. Though he had ordered me to allow to each person only a certain quantity of meat at every meal, I observed this rule only when meat was rare. The air here is very keen, and one has a great appetite. One must eat and act, if he wants good health and spirits. I speak from experience; for once, when I had ague chills, and was obliged to keep the house with nothing to do, I was dreary and down-hearted. On the contrary, if I was busy with hunting or anything else, I was not so dull by half. So I tried to keep the people as busy as possible. I set them to making a small cellar to keep meat fresh in hot weather; but when M. de la Salle came back, he said it was too small. As he always wanted to do everything on a grand scale, he prepared to make a large one, and marked out the plan." This plan of the large cellar, like more important undertakings of its unhappy projector, proved too extensive for execution, the colonists being engrossed by the daily care of keeping themselves alive.

A gleam of hilarity shot for an instant out of the clouds. The young Canadian, Barbier, usually conducted the hunting-parties; and some of the women and girls often went out with them, to aid in cutting up the meat. Barbier became enamoured of one of

the girls; and as his devotion to her was the subject of comment, he asked Joutel for leave to marry her. The commandant, after due counsel with the priests and friars, vouchsafed his consent, and the rite was duly solemnized; whereupon, fired by the example, the Marquis de la Sablonnière begged leave to marry another of the girls. Joutel, the gardener's son, concerned that a marquis should so abase himself, and anxious at the same time for the morals of the fort, which La Salle had especially commended to his care, not only flatly refused, but, in the plenitude of his authority, forbade the lovers all further intercourse.

Father Zenobe Membré, superior of the mission, gave unwilling occasion for further merriment. These worthy friars were singularly unhappy in their dealings with the buffalo, one of which, it may be remembered, had already knocked down Father Anastase. Undeterred by his example, Father Zenobe one day went out with the hunters, carrying a gun like the rest. Joutel shot a buffalo, which was making off, badly wounded, when a second shot stopped it, and it presently lay down. The father superior thought it was dead; and, without heeding the warning shout of Joutel, he approached, and pushed it with the butt of his gun. The bull sprang up with an effort of expiring fury, and, in the words of Joutel, "trampled on the father, took the skin off his face in several places, and broke his gun, so that he could hardly manage to get away, and remained

in an almost helpless state for more than three months. Bad as the accident was, he was laughed at nevertheless for his rashness."

The mishaps of the friars did not end here. Father Maxime Le Clerc was set upon by a boar belonging to the colony. "I do not know," says Joutel, "what spite the beast had against him, whether for a beating or some other offence; but, however this may be, I saw the father running and crying for help, and the boar running after him. I went to the rescue, but could not come up in time. The father stooped as he ran, to gather up his cassock from about his legs; and the boar, which ran faster than he, struck him in the arm with his tusks, so that some of the nerves were torn. Thus, all three of our good Récollet fathers were near being the victims of animals."[1]

In spite of his efforts to encourage them, the followers of Joutel were fast losing heart. Father Maxime Le Clerc kept a journal, in which he set down various charges against La Salle. Joutel got possession of the paper, and burned it on the urgent entreaty of the friars, who dreaded what might ensue, should the absent commander become aware of the aspersions cast upon him. The elder Duhaut fomented the rising discontent of the colonists, played the demagogue, told them that La Salle would never return, and tried to make himself their leader. Joutel detected the mischief, and, with a lenity which he afterwards deeply regretted, con-

[1] Joutel, *Relation* (Margry, iii. 244, 246).

tented himself with a rebuke to the offender, and words of reproof and encouragement to the dejected band.

He had caused the grass to be cut near the fort, so as to form a sort of playground; and here, one evening, he and some of the party were trying to amuse themselves, when they heard shouts from beyond the river, and Joutel recognized the voice of La Salle. Hastening to meet him in a wooden canoe, he brought him and his party to the fort. Twenty men had gone out with him, and eight had returned. Of the rest, four had deserted, one had been lost, one had been devoured by an alligator; and the others, giving out on the march, had probably perished in attempting to regain the fort. The travellers told of a rich country, a wild and beautiful landscape, — woods, rivers, groves, and prairies; but all availed nothing, and the acquisition of five horses was but an indifferent return for the loss of twelve men.

After leaving the fort, they had journeyed towards the northeast, over plains green as an emerald with the young verdure of April, till at length they saw, far as the eye could reach, the boundless prairie alive with herds of buffalo. The animals were in one of their tame or stupid moods; and they killed nine or ten of them without the least difficulty, drying the best parts of the meat. They crossed the Colorado on a raft, and reached the banks of another river, where one of the party, named Hiens, a German of

Würtemberg, and an old buccaneer, was mired and nearly suffocated in a mud-hole. Unfortunately, as will soon appear, he managed to crawl out; and, to console him, the river was christened with his name. The party made a bridge of felled trees, on which they crossed in safety. La Salle now changed their course, and journeyed eastward, when the travellers soon found themselves in the midst of a numerous Indian population, where they were feasted and caressed without measure. At another village they were less fortunate. The inhabitants were friendly by day and hostile by night. They came to attack the French in their camp, but withdrew, daunted by the menacing voice of La Salle, who had heard them approaching through the cane-brake.

La Salle's favorite Shawanoe hunter, Nika, who had followed him from Canada to France, and from France to Texas, was bitten by a rattlesnake; and, though he recovered, the accident detained the party for several days. At length they resumed their journey, but were stopped by a river, called by Douay, "La Rivière des Malheurs." La Salle and Cavelier, with a few others, tried to cross on a raft, which, as it reached the channel, was caught by a current of marvellous swiftness. Douay and Moranget, watching the transit from the edge of the cane-brake, beheld their commander swept down the stream, and vanishing, as it were, in an instant. All that day they remained with their companions on the bank, lamenting in despair for the loss of their guar-

dian angel, for so Douay calls La Salle.[1] It was fast growing dark, when, to their unspeakable relief, they saw him advancing with his party along the opposite bank, having succeeded, after great exertion, in guiding the raft to land. How to rejoin him was now the question. Douay and his companions, who had tasted no food that day, broke their fast on two young eagles which they knocked out of their nest, and then spent the night in rueful consultation as to the means of crossing the river. In the morning they waded into the marsh, the friar with his breviary in his hood to keep it dry, and hacked among the canes till they had gathered enough to make another raft; on which, profiting by La Salle's experience, they safely crossed, and rejoined him.

Next, they became entangled in a cane-brake, where La Salle, as usual with him in such cases, took the lead, a hatchet in each hand, and hewed out a path for his followers. They soon reached the villages of the Cenis Indians, on and near the river Trinity, — a tribe then powerful, but long since extinct. Nothing could surpass the friendliness of their welcome. The chiefs came to meet them, bearing the calumet, and followed by warriors in shirts of embroidered deerskin. Then the whole village swarmed out like bees, gathering around the

[1] "Ce fût une desolation extrême pour nous tous qui desesperions de revoir jamais nostre Ange tutélaire, le Sieur de la Salle. . . . Tout le jour se passa en pleurs et en larmes." — *Douay in Le Clerc*, ii. 315.

visitors with offerings of food and all that was precious in their eyes. La Salle was lodged with the great chief; but he compelled his men to encamp at a distance, lest the ardor of their gallantry might give occasion of offence. The lodges of the Cenis, forty or fifty feet high, and covered with a thatch of meadow-grass, looked like huge bee-hives. Each held several families, whose fire was in the middle, and their beds around the circumference. The spoil of the Spaniards was to be seen on all sides, — silver lamps and spoons, swords, old muskets, money, clothing, and a bull of the Pope dispensing the Spanish colonists of New Mexico from fasting during summer.[1] These treasures, as well as their numerous horses, were obtained by the Cenis from their neighbors and allies the Camanches, that fierce prairie banditti who then, as now, scourged the Mexican border with their bloody forays. A party of these wild horsemen was in the village. Douay was edified at seeing them make the sign of the cross in imitation of the neophytes of one of the Spanish missions. They enacted, too, the ceremony of the mass; and one of them, in his rude way, drew a sketch of a picture he had seen in some church which he had pillaged, wherein the friar plainly recognized the Virgin weeping at the foot of the cross. They invited the French to join them on a raid into New Mexico; and they spoke with contempt, as their tribesmen will speak to this day, of the Spanish

[1] Douay in Le Clerc, ii. 321; Cavelier, *Relation*.

creoles, saying that it would be easy to conquer a nation of cowards who make people walk before them with fans to cool them in hot weather.[1]

Soon after leaving the Cenis villages, both La Salle and his nephew Moranget were attacked by fever. This caused a delay of more than two months, during which the party seem to have remained encamped on the Neches, or possibly the Sabine. When at length the invalids had recovered sufficient strength to travel, the stock of ammunition was nearly spent, some of the men had deserted, and the condition of the travellers was such that there seemed no alternative but to return to Fort St. Louis. This they accordingly did, greatly aided in their march by the horses bought from the Cenis, and suffering no very serious accident by the way, — excepting the loss of La Salle's servant, Dumesnil, who was seized by an alligator while attempting to cross the Colorado.

The temporary excitement caused among the colonists by their return soon gave place to a dejection bordering on despair. "This pleasant land," writes Cavelier, "seemed to us an abode of weariness and a perpetual prison." Flattering themselves with the delusion, common to exiles of every kind, that they were objects of solicitude at home, they watched daily, with straining eyes, for an approaching sail. Ships, indeed, had ranged the coast to seek them, but with no friendly intent. Their thoughts dwelt,

[1] Douay in Le Clerc, ii. 324, 325.

with unspeakable yearning, on the France they had left behind, which, to their longing fancy, was pictured as an unattainable Eden. Well might they despond; for of a hundred and eighty colonists, besides the crew of the "Belle," less than forty-five remained. The weary precincts of Fort St. Louis, with its fence of rigid palisades, its area of trampled earth, its buildings of weather-stained timber, and its well-peopled graveyard without, were hateful to their sight. La Salle had a heavy task to save them from despair. His composure, his unfailing equanimity, his words of encouragement and cheer, were the breath of life to this forlorn company; for though he could not impart to minds of less adamantine temper the audacity of hope with which he still clung to the final accomplishment of his purposes, the contagion of his hardihood touched, nevertheless, the drooping spirits of his followers.[1]

The journey to Canada was clearly their only hope; and, after a brief rest, La Salle prepared to renew the attempt. He proposed that Joutel should this time be of the party; and should proceed from Quebec to France, with his brother Cavelier, to solicit succors for the colony, while he himself

[1] "L'égalité d'humeur du Chef rassuroit tout le monde; et il trouvoit des resources à tout par son esprit qui relevoit les espérances les plus abatues." — Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 152.

"Il seroit difficile de trouver dans l'Histoire un courage plus intrepide et plus invincible que celuy du Sieur de la Salle dans les évenemens contraires; il ne fût jamais abatu, et il espéroit toujours avec le secours du Ciel de venir à bout de son entreprise malgré tous les obstacles qui se présentoient." — *Douay in Le Clerc*, ii. 327.

returned to Texas. A new obstacle was presently interposed. La Salle, whose constitution seems to have suffered from his long course of hardships, was attacked in November with hernia. Joutel offered to conduct the party in his stead; but La Salle replied that his own presence was indispensable at the Illinois. He had the good fortune to recover, within four or five weeks, sufficiently to undertake the journey; and all in the fort busied themselves in preparing an outfit. In such straits were they for clothing, that the sails of the "Belle" were cut up to make coats for the adventurers. Christmas came, and was solemnly observed. There was a midnight mass in the chapel, where Membré, Cavelier, Douay, and their priestly brethren stood before the altar, in vestments strangely contrasting with the rude temple and the ruder garb of the worshippers. And as Membré elevated the consecrated wafer, and the lamps burned dim through the clouds of incense, the kneeling group drew from the daily miracle such consolation as true Catholics alone can know. When Twelfth Night came, all gathered in the hall, and cried, after the jovial old custom, "The King drinks," with hearts, perhaps, as cheerless as their cups, which were filled with cold water.

On the morrow, the band of adventurers mustered for the fatal journey.[1] The five horses, bought by

[1] I follow Douay's date, who makes the day of departure the seventh of January, or the day after Twelfth Night. Joutel thinks it was the twelfth of January, but professes uncertainty as to all his dates at this time, as he lost his notes.

La Salle of the Indians, stood in the area of the fort, packed for the march; and here was gathered the wretched remnant of the colony, — those who were to go, and those who were to stay behind. These latter were about twenty in all, — Barbier, who was to command in the place of Joutel; Sablonnière, who, despite his title of marquis, was held in great contempt;[1] the friars, Membré and Le Clerc,[2] and the priest Chefdeville, besides a surgeon, soldiers, laborers, seven women and girls, and several children, doomed, in this deadly exile, to wait the issues of the journey, and the possible arrival of a tardy succor. La Salle had made them a last address, delivered, we are told, with that winning air which, though alien from his usual bearing, seems to have been at times a natural expression of this unhappy man.[3] It was a bitter parting, one of sighs, tears, and embracings, — the farewell of those on whose souls had sunk a heavy boding that they would never

[1] He had to be kept on short allowance, because he was in the habit of bargaining away everything given to him. He had squandered the little that belonged to him at St. Domingo, in amusements "indignes de sa naissance," and in consequence was suffering from diseases which disabled him from walking. (*Procès Verbal*, 18 *Avril*, 1688.)

[2] Maxime le Clerc was a relative of the author of *L'Établissement de la Foi*.

[3] "Il fit une Harangue pleine d'éloquence et de cet air engageant qui luy estoit si naturel: toute la petite Colonie y estoit presente et en fût touchée jusques aux larmes, persuadée de la nécessité de son voyage et de la droiture de ses intentions." — *Douay in Le Clerc*, ii. 280.

meet again.[1] Equipped and weaponed for the journey, the adventurers filed from the gate, crossed the river, and held their slow march over the prairies beyond, till intervening woods and hills shut Fort St. Louis forever from their sight.

[1] "Nous nous separâmes les uns des autres, d'une manière si tendre et si triste qu'il sembloit que nous avions tous le secret pressentiment que nous ne nous reverrions jamais." — Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 158.

CHAPTER XXVII.

1687.

ASSASSINATION OF LA SALLE.

His Followers. — Prairie Travelling. — A Hunters' Quarrel. — The Murder of Moranget. — The Conspiracy. — Death of La Salle : his Character.

The travellers were crossing a marshy prairie towards a distant belt of woods, that followed the course of a little river. They led with them their five horses, laden with their scanty baggage, and, with what was of no less importance, their stock of presents for Indians. Some wore the remains of the clothing they had worn from France, eked out with deer-skins, dressed in the Indian manner; and some had coats of old sail-cloth. Here was La Salle, in whom one would have known, at a glance, the chief of the party; and the priest, Cavelier, who seems to have shared not one of the high traits of his younger brother. Here, too, were their nephews, Moranget and the boy Cavelier, now about seventeen years old; the trusty soldier Joutel; and the friar Anastase Douay. Duhaut followed, a man of respectable birth and education; and Liotot, the surgeon of the party.

At home, they might perhaps have lived and died with a fair repute; but the wilderness is a rude touchstone, which often reveals traits that would have lain buried and unsuspected in civilized life. The German Hiens, the ex-buccaneer, was also of the number. He had probably sailed with an English crew; for he was sometimes known as *Gemme Anglais*, or "English Jem."[1] The Sieur de Marle; Teissier, a pilot; L'Archevêque, a servant of Duhaut; and others, to the number in all of seventeen, — made up the party; to which is to be added Nika, La Salle's Shawanoe hunter, who, as well as another Indian, had twice crossed the ocean with him, and still followed his fortunes with an admiring though undemonstrative fidelity.

They passed the prairie, and neared the forest. Here they saw buffalo; and the hunters approached, and killed several of them. Then they traversed the woods; found and forded the shallow and rushy stream, and pushed through the forest beyond, till they again reached the open prairie. Heavy clouds gathered over them, and it rained all night; but they sheltered themselves under the fresh hides of the buffalo they had killed.

It is impossible, as it would be needless, to follow the detail of their daily march.[2] It was such an one,

[1] Tonty also speaks of him as "un flibustier anglois." In another document, he is called "James."

[2] Of the three narratives of this journey, those of Joutel, Cavelier, and Anastase Douay, the first is by far the best. That of Cavelier seems the work of a man of confused brain and indifferent

though with unwonted hardship, as is familiar to the memory of many a prairie traveller of our own time. They suffered greatly from the want of shoes, and found for a while no better substitute than a casing of raw buffalo-hide, which they were forced to keep always wet, as, when dry, it hardened about the foot like iron. At length they bought dressed deer-skin from the Indians, of which they made tolerable moccasins. The rivers, streams, and gullies filled with water were without number; and to cross them they made a boat of bull-hide, like the "bull boat" still used on the Upper Missouri. This did good service, as, with the help of their horses, they could carry it with them. Two or three men could cross in it at once, and the horses swam after them like dogs. Sometimes they traversed the sunny prairie; sometimes dived into the dark recesses of the forest, where the buffalo, descending daily from their pastures in long files to drink at the river, often made a broad and easy path for the travellers. When foul weather arrested them, they built huts of bark and long meadow-grass; and safely sheltered lounged away the day, while their horses, picketed near by, stood steaming in the rain. At night, they usually set a rude stockade about their camp; and here, by

memory. Some of his statements are irreconcilable with those of Joutel and Douay; and known facts of his history justify the suspicion of a wilful inaccuracy. Joutel's account is of a very different character, and seems to be the work of an honest and intelligent man. Douay's account is brief; but it agrees with that of Joutel, in most essential points.

the grassy border of a brook, or at the edge of a grove where a spring bubbled up through the sands, they lay asleep around the embers of their fire, while the man on guard listened to the deep breathing of the slumbering horses, and the howling of the wolves that saluted the rising moon as it flooded the waste of prairie with pale mystic radiance.

They met Indians almost daily, — sometimes a band of hunters, mounted or on foot, chasing buffalo on the plains; sometimes a party of fishermen; sometimes a winter camp, on the slope of a hill or under the sheltering border of a forest. They held intercourse with them in the distance by signs; often they disarmed their distrust, and attracted them into their camp; and often they visited them in their lodges, where, seated on buffalo-robes, they smoked with their entertainers, passing the pipe from hand to hand, after the custom still in use among the prairie tribes. Cavelier says that they once saw a band of a hundred and fifty mounted Indians attacking a herd of buffalo with lances pointed with sharpened bone. The old priest was delighted with the sport, which he pronounces "the most diverting thing in the world." On another occasion, when the party were encamped near the village of a tribe which Cavelier calls Sassory, he saw them catch an alligator about twelve feet long, which they proceeded to torture as if he were a human enemy, — first putting out his eyes, and then leading him to the neighboring prairie, where, having confined him by a

number of stakes, they spent the entire day in tormenting him.[1]

Holding a northerly course, the travellers crossed the Brazos, and reached the waters of the Trinity. The weather was unfavorable, and on one occasion they encamped in the rain during four or five days together. It was not an harmonious company. La Salle's cold and haughty reserve had returned, at least for those of his followers to whom he was not partial. Duhaut and the surgeon Liotot, both of whom were men of some property, had a large pecuniary stake in the enterprise, and were disappointed and incensed at its ruinous result. They had a quarrel with young Moranget, whose hot and hasty temper was as little fitted to conciliate as was the harsh reserve of his uncle. Already at Fort St. Louis, Duhaut had intrigued among the men; and the mild admonition of Joutel had not, it seems, sufficed to divert him from his sinister purposes. Liotot, it is said, had secretly sworn vengeance against La Salle, whom he charged with having caused the death of his brother, or, as some will have it, his nephew. On one of the former journeys this young man's strength had failed; and, La Salle having ordered him to return to the fort, he had been killed by Indians on the way.

The party moved again as the weather improved, and on the fifteenth of March encamped within a few miles of a spot which La Salle had passed on his

[1] Cavelier, *Relation*.

preceding journey, and where he had left a quantity of Indian corn and beans in *cache;* that is to say, hidden in the ground or in a hollow tree. As provisions were falling short, he sent a party from the camp to find it. These men were Duhaut, Liotot,[1] Hiens the buccaneer, Teissier, L'Archevêque, Nika the hunter, and La Salle's servant Saget. They opened the *cache*, and found the contents spoiled; but as they returned from their bootless errand they saw buffalo, and Nika shot two of them. They now encamped on the spot, and sent the servant to inform La Salle, in order that he might send horses to bring in the meat. Accordingly, on the next day, he directed Moranget and De Marle, with the necessary horses, to go with Saget to the hunters' camp. When they arrived, they found that Duhaut and his companions had already cut up the meat, and laid it upon scaffolds for smoking, though it was not yet so dry as, it seems, this process required. Duhaut and the others had also put by, for themselves, the marrow-bones and certain portions of the meat, to which, by woodland custom, they had a perfect right. Moranget, whose rashness and violence had once before caused a fatal catastrophe, fell into a most unreasonable fit of rage, berated and menaced Duhaut and his party, and ended by seizing upon the whole of the meat, including the reserved portions. This added fuel to the fire of Duhaut's old grudge against Moranget and his uncle. There is reason to think

[1] Called Lanquetot by Tonty.

that he had harbored deadly designs, the execution of which was only hastened by the present outbreak. The surgeon also bore hatred against Moranget, whom he had nursed with constant attention when wounded by an Indian arrow, and who had since repaid him with abuse. These two now took counsel apart with Hiens, Teissier, and L'Archevêque; and it was resolved to kill Moranget that night. Nika, La Salle's devoted follower, and Saget, his faithful servant, must die with him. All of the five were of one mind except the pilot Teissier, who neither aided nor opposed the plot.

Night came; the woods grew dark; the evening meal was finished, and the evening pipes were smoked. The order of the guard was arranged; and, doubtless by design, the first hour of the night was assigned to Moranget, the second to Saget, and the third to Nika. Gun in hand, each stood watch in turn over the silent but not sleeping forms around him, till, his time expiring, he called the man who was to relieve him, wrapped himself in his blanket, and was soon buried in a slumber that was to be his last. Now the assassins rose. Duhaut and Hiens stood with their guns cocked, ready to shoot down any one of the destined victims who should resist or fly. The surgeon, with an axe, stole towards the three sleepers, and struck a rapid blow at each in turn. Saget and Nika died with little movement; but Moranget started spasmodically into a sitting posture, gasping and unable to speak; and the mur-

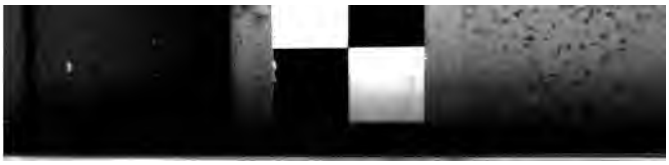
derers compelled De Marle, who was not in their plot, to compromise himself by despatching him.

The floodgates of murder were open, and the torrent must have its way. Vengeance and safety alike demanded the death of La Salle. Hiens, or "English Jem," alone seems to have hesitated; for he was one of those to whom that stern commander had always been partial. Meanwhile, the intended victim was still at his camp, about six miles distant. It is easy to picture, with sufficient accuracy, the features of the scene, — the sheds of bark and branches, beneath which, among blankets and buffalo-robes, camp-utensils, pack-saddles, rude harness, guns, powder-horns, and bullet-pouches, the men lounged away the hour, sleeping or smoking, or talking among themselves; the blackened kettles that hung from tripods of poles over the fires; the Indians strolling about the place or lying, like dogs in the sun, with eyes half-shut, yet all observant; and, in the neighboring meadow, the horses grazing under the eye of a watchman.

It was the eighteenth of March. Moranget and his companions had been expected to return the night before; but the whole day passed, and they did not appear. La Salle became very anxious. He resolved to go and look for them; but not well knowing the way, he told the Indians who were about the camp that he would give them a hatchet if they would guide him. One of them accepted the offer; and La Salle prepared to set out in the morning, at

the same time directing Joutel to be ready to go with him. Joutel says: "That evening, while we were talking about what could have happened to the absent men, he seemed to have a presentiment of what was to take place. He asked me if I had heard of any machinations against them, or if I had noticed any bad design on the part of Duhaut and the rest. I answered that I had heard nothing, except that they sometimes complained of being found fault with so often; and that this was all I knew; besides which, as they were persuaded that I was in his interest, they would not have told me of any bad design they might have. We were very uneasy all the rest of the evening."

In the morning, La Salle set out with his Indian guide. He had changed his mind with regard to Joutel, whom he now directed to remain in charge of the camp and to keep a careful watch. He told the friar Anastase Douay to come with him instead of Joutel, whose gun, which was the best in the party, he borrowed for the occasion, as well as his pistol. The three proceeded on their way, — La Salle, the friar, and the Indian. "All the way," writes the friar, "he spoke to me of nothing but matters of piety, grace, and predestination; enlarging on the debt he owed to God, who had saved him from so many perils during more than twenty years of travel in America. Suddenly, I saw him overwhelmed with a profound sadness, for which he himself could not account. He was so much moved



Assassination of La Salle.

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that I scarcely knew him." He soon recovered his usual calmness; and they walked on till they approached the camp of Duhaut, which was on the farther side of a small river. Looking about him with the eye of a woodsman, La Salle saw two eagles circling in the air nearly over him, as if attracted by carcasses of beasts or men. He fired his gun and his pistol, as a summons to any of his followers who might be within hearing. The shots reached the ears of the conspirators. Rightly conjecturing by whom they were fired, several of them, led by Duhaut, crossed the river at a little distance above, where trees or other intervening objects hid them from sight. Duhaut and the surgeon crouched like Indians in the long, dry, reed-like grass of the last summer's growth, while L'Archevêque stood in sight near the bank. La Salle, continuing to advance, soon saw him, and, calling to him, demanded where was Moranget. The man, without lifting his hat, or any show of respect, replied in an agitated and broken voice, but with a tone of studied insolence, that Moranget was strolling about somewhere. La Salle rebuked and menaced him. He rejoined with increased insolence, drawing back, as he spoke, towards the ambuscade, while the incensed commander advanced to chastise him. At that moment a shot was fired from the grass, instantly followed by another; and, pierced through the brain, La Salle dropped dead.

The friar at his side stood terror-stricken, unable

to advance or to fly; when Duhaut, rising from the ambuscade, called out to him to take courage, for he had nothing to fear. The murderers now came forward, and with wild looks gathered about their victim. "There thou liest, great Bashaw! There thou liest!"[1] exclaimed the surgeon Liotot, in base exultation over the unconscious corpse. With mockery and insult, they stripped it naked, dragged it into the bushes, and left it there, a prey to the buzzards and the wolves.

Thus in the vigor of his manhood, at the age of forty-three, died Robert Cavelier de la Salle, "one of the greatest men," writes Tonty, "of this age;" without question one of the most remarkable explorers whose names live in history. His faithful officer Joutel thus sketches his portrait: "His firmness, his courage, his great knowledge of the arts and sciences, which made him equal to every undertaking, and his untiring energy, which enabled him to surmount every obstacle, would have won at last a glorious success for his grand enterprise, had not all his fine qualities been counterbalanced by a haughtiness of manner which often made him insupportable, and by a harshness towards those under his command which drew upon him an implacable hatred, and was at last the cause of his death."[2]

The enthusiasm of the disinterested and chivalrous

[1] "Te voilà, grand Bacha, te voilà!" — Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 203.

[2] *Ibid.*

Champlain was not the enthusiasm of La Salle; nor had he any part in the self-devoted zeal of the early Jesuit explorers. He belonged not to the age of the knight-errant and the saint, but to the modern world of practical study and practical action. He was the hero not of a principle nor of a faith, but simply of a fixed idea and a determined purpose. As often happens with concentred and energetic natures, his purpose was to him a passion and an inspiration; and he clung to it with a certain fanaticism of devotion. It was the offspring of an ambition vast and comprehensive, yet acting in the interest both of France and of civilization.

Serious in all things, incapable of the lighter pleasures, incapable of repose, finding no joy but in the pursuit of great designs, too shy for society and too reserved for popularity, often unsympathetic and always seeming so, smothering emotions which he could not utter, schooled to universal distrust, stern to his followers and pitiless to himself, bearing the brunt of every hardship and every danger, demanding of others an equal constancy joined to an implicit deference, heeding no counsel but his own, attempting the impossible and grasping at what was too vast to hold, — he contained in his own complex and painful nature the chief springs of his triumphs, his failures, and his death.

It is easy to reckon up his defects, but it is not easy to hide from sight the Roman virtues that redeemed them. Beset by a throng of enemies, he

stands, like the King of Israel, head and shoulders above them all. He was a tower of adamant, against whose impregnable front hardship and danger, the rage of man and of the elements, the southern sun, the northern blast, fatigue, famine, disease, delay, disappointment, and deferred hope emptied their quivers in vain. That very pride which, Coriolanus-like, declared itself most sternly in the thickest press of foes, has in it something to challenge admiration. Never, under the impenetrable mail of paladin or crusader, beat a heart of more intrepid mettle than within the stoic panoply that armed the breast of La Salle. To estimate aright the marvels of his patient fortitude, one must follow on his track through the vast scene of his interminable journeyings, — those thousands of weary miles of forest, marsh, and river, where, again and again, in the bitterness of baffled striving, the untiring pilgrim pushed onward towards the goal which he was never to attain. America owes him an enduring memory; for in this masculine figure she sees the pioneer who guided her to the possession of her richest heritage.[1]

[1] On the assassination of La Salle, the evidence is fourfold: 1. The narrative of Douay, who was with him at the time. 2. That of Joutel, who learned the facts, immediately after they took place, from Douay and others, and who parted from La Salle an hour or more before his death. 3. A document preserved in the Archives de la Marine, entitled *Relation de la Mort du Sr. de la Salle, suivant le rapport d'un nommé Couture à qui M. Cavelier l'apprit en passant au pays des Akansa, avec toutes les circonstances que le dit Couture a apprises d'un François que M. Cavelier avoit laissé aux dits pays des Akansa, crainte qu'il ne gardât pas le secret.* 4. The authentic

memoir of Tonty, of which a copy from the original is before me, and which has recently been printed by Margry.

The narrative of Cavelier unfortunately fails us several weeks before the death of his brother, the remainder being lost. On a study of these various documents, it is impossible to resist the conclusion that neither Cavelier nor Douay always wrote honestly. Joutel, on the contrary, gives the impression of sense, intelligence, and candor throughout. Charlevoix, who knew him long after, says that he was "un fort honnête homme, et le seul de la troupe de M. de la Salle, sur qui ce célèbre voyageur pût compter." Tonty derived his information from the survivors of La Salle's party. Couture, whose statements are embodied in the *Relation de la Mort de M. de la Salle*, was one of Tonty's men, who, as will be seen hereafter, were left by him at the mouth of the Arkansas, and to whom Cavelier told the story of his brother's death. Couture also repeats the statements of one of La Salle's followers, undoubtedly a Parisian boy, named Barthelemy, who was violently prejudiced against his chief, whom he slanders to the utmost of his skill, saying that he was so enraged at his failures that he did not approach the sacraments for two years; that he nearly starved his brother Cavelier, allowing him only a handful of meal a day; that he killed with his own hand "quantité de personnes," who did not work to his liking; and that he killed the sick in their beds, without mercy, under the pretence that they were counterfeiting sickness in order to escape work. These assertions certainly have no other foundation than the undeniable rigor of La Salle's command. Douay says that he confessed and made his devotions on the morning of his death, while Cavelier always speaks of him as the hope and the staff of the colony.

Douay declares that La Salle lived an hour after the fatal shot; that he gave him absolution, buried his body, and planted a cross on his grave. At the time, he told Joutel a different story; and the latter, with the best means of learning the facts, explicitly denies the friar's printed statement. Couture, on the authority of Cavelier himself, also says that neither he nor Douay was permitted to take any step for burying the body. Tonty says that Cavelier begged leave to do so, but was refused. Douay, unwilling to place upon record facts from which the inference might easily be drawn that he had been terrified from discharging his duty, no doubt invented the story of the burial, as well as that of the edifying behavior of Moranget, after he had been struck in the head with an axe.

The locality of La Salle's assassination is sufficiently clear, from a comparison of the several narratives; and it is also indicated on a contemporary manuscript map, made on the return of the survivors of the party to France. The scene of the catastrophe is here placed on a southern branch of the Trinity.

La Salle's debts, at the time of his death, according to a schedule presented in 1701 to Champigny, intendant of Canada, amounted to 106,831 livres, without reckoning interest. This cannot be meant to include all, as items are given which raise the amount much higher. In 1678 and 1679 alone, he contracted debts to the amount of 97,184 livres, of which 46,000 were furnished by Branssac, fiscal attorney of the Seminary of Montreal. This was to be paid in beaver-skins. Frontenac, at the same time, became his surety for 13,623 livres. In 1684, he borrowed 34,825 livres from the Sieur Pen, at Paris. These sums do not include the losses incurred by his family, which, in the memorial presented by them to the King, are set down at 500,000 livres for the expeditions between 1678 and 1683, and 300,000 livres for the fatal Texan expedition of 1684. These last figures are certainly exaggerated.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

1687, 1688.

THE INNOCENT AND THE GUILTY.

TRIUMPH OF THE MURDERERS. — DANGER OF JOUTEL. — JOUTEL AMONG THE CENIS. — WHITE SAVAGES. — INSOLENCE OF DUHAUT AND HIS ACCOMPLICES. — MURDER OF DUHAUT AND LIOTOT. — HIENS, THE BUCCANEER. — JOUTEL AND HIS PARTY: THEIR ESCAPE; THEY REACH THE ARKANSAS. — BRAVERY AND DEVOTION OF TONTY. — THE FUGITIVES REACH THE ILLINOIS. — UNWORTHY CONDUCT OF CAVELIER. — HE AND HIS COMPANIONS RETURN TO FRANCE.

FATHER ANASTASE DOUAY returned to the camp, and, aghast with grief and terror, rushed into the hut of Cavelier. "My poor brother is dead!" cried the priest, instantly divining the catastrophe from the horror-stricken face of the messenger. Close behind came the murderers, Duhaut at their head. Cavelier, his young nephew, and Douay himself, all fell on their knees, expecting instant death. The priest begged piteously for half an hour to prepare for his end; but terror and submission sufficed, and no more blood was shed. The camp yielded without resistance; and Duhaut was lord of all. In truth, there were none to oppose him; for, except the assassins themselves, the party was now reduced to six

persons, — Joutel, Douay, the elder Cavelier, his young nephew, and two other boys, the orphan Talon and a lad called Barthelemy.

Joutel, for the moment, was absent; and L'Archevêque, who had a kindness for him, went quietly to seek him. He found him on a hillock, making a fire of dried grass in order that the smoke might guide La Salle on his return, and watching the horses grazing in the meadow below. "I was very much surprised," writes Joutel, "when I saw him approaching. When he came up to me he seemed all in confusion, or, rather, out of his wits. He began with saying that there was very bad news. I asked what it was. He answered that the Sieur de la Salle was dead, and also his nephew the Sieur de Moranget, his Indian hunter, and his servant. I was petrified, and did not know what to say; for I saw that they had been murdered. The man added that, at first, the murderers had sworn to kill me too. I easily believed it, for I had always been in the interest of M. de la Salle, and had commanded in his place; and it is hard to please everybody, or prevent some from being dissatisfied. I was greatly perplexed as to what I ought to do, and whether I had not better escape to the woods, whithersoever God should guide me; but, by bad or good luck, I had no gun and only one pistol, without balls or powder except what was in my powder-horn. To whatever side I turned, my life was in great peril. It is true that L'Archevêque assured me that they

had changed their minds, and had agreed to murder nobody else, unless they met with resistance. So, being in no condition, as I just said, to go far, having neither arms nor powder, I abandoned myself to Providence, and went back to the camp, where I found that these wretched murderers had seized everything belonging to M. de la Salle, and even my personal effects. They had also taken possession of all the arms. The first words that Duhaut said to me were, that each should command in turn; to which I made no answer. I saw M. Cavelier praying in a corner, and Father Anastase in another. He did not dare to speak to me, nor did I dare to go towards him till I had seen the designs of the assassins. They were in furious excitement, but, nevertheless, very uneasy and embarrassed. I was some time without speaking, and, as it were, without moving, for fear of giving umbrage to our enemies.

"They had cooked some meat, and when it was supper-time they distributed it as they saw fit, saying that formerly their share had been served out to them, but that it was they who would serve it out in future. They, no doubt, wanted me to say something that would give them a chance to make a noise; but I managed always to keep my mouth closed. When night came and it was time to stand guard, they were in perplexity, as they could not do it alone; therefore they said to M. Cavelier, Father Anastase, me, and the others who were not in the plot with them, that all we had to do was to stand

guard as usual; that there was no use in thinking about what had happened, — that what was done was done; that they had been driven to it by despair, and that they were sorry for it, and meant no more harm to anybody. M. Cavelier took up the word, and told them that when they killed M. de la Salle they killed themselves, for there was nobody but him who could get us out of this country. At last, after a good deal of talk on both sides, they gave us our arms. So we stood guard; during which, M. Cavelier told me how they had come to the camp, entered his hut like so many madmen, and seized everything in it."

Joutel, Douay, and the two Caveliers spent a sleepless night, consulting as to what they should do. They mutually pledged themselves to stand by each other to the last, and to escape as soon as they could from the company of the assassins. In the morning, Duhaut and his accomplices, after much discussion, resolved to go to the Cenis villages; and, accordingly, the whole party broke up their camp, packed their horses, and began their march. They went five leagues, and encamped at the edge of a grove. On the following day they advanced again till noon, when heavy rains began, and they were forced to stop by the banks of a river. "We passed the night and the next day there," says Joutel; "and during that time my mind was possessed with dark thoughts. It was hard to prevent ourselves from being in constant fear among such men, and we could not look at

them without horror. When I thought of the cruel deeds they had committed, and the danger we were in from them, I longed to revenge the evil they had done us. This would have been easy while they were asleep; but M. Cavelier dissuaded us, saying that we ought to leave vengeance to God, and that he himself had more to revenge than we, having lost his brother and his nephew."

The comic alternated with the tragic. On the twenty-third, they reached the bank of a river too deep to ford. Those who knew how to swim crossed without difficulty, but Joutel, Cavelier, and Douay were not of the number. Accordingly, they launched a log of light, dry wood, embraced it with one arm, and struck out for the other bank with their legs and the arm that was left free. But the friar became frightened. "He only clung fast to the aforesaid log," says Joutel, "and did nothing to help us forward. While I was trying to swim, my body being stretched at full length, I hit him in the belly with my feet; on which he thought it was all over with him, and, I can answer for it, he invoked Saint Francis with might and main. I could not help laughing, though I was myself in danger of drowning." Some Indians who had joined the party swam to the rescue, and pushed the log across.

The path to the Cenis villages was exceedingly faint, and but for the Indians they would have lost the way. They crossed the main stream of the Trinity in a boat of raw hides, and then, being short

of provisions, held a council to determine what they should do. It was resolved that Joutel, with Hiens, Liotot, and Teissier, should go in advance to the villages and buy a supply of corn. Thus, Joutel found himself doomed to the company of three villains, who, he strongly suspected, were contriving an opportunity to kill him; but, as he had no choice, he dissembled his doubts, and set out with his sinister companions, Duhaut having first supplied him with goods for the intended barter.

They rode over hills and plains till night, encamped, supped on a wild turkey, and continued their journey till the afternoon of the next day, when they saw three men approaching on horseback, one of whom, to Joutel's alarm, was dressed like a Spaniard. He proved, however, to be a Cenis Indian, like the others. The three turned their horses' heads, and accompanied the Frenchmen on their way. At length they neared the Indian town, which, with its large thatched lodges, looked like a cluster of gigantic haystacks. Their approach had been made known, and they were received in solemn state. Twelve of the elders came to meet them in their dress of ceremony, each with his face daubed red or black, and his head adorned with painted plumes. From their shoulders hung deer-skins wrought with gay colors. Some carried war-clubs; some, bows and arrows; some, the blades of Spanish rapiers, attached to wooden handles decorated with hawk's bells and bunches of feathers. They stopped

before the honored guests, and, raising their hands aloft, uttered howls so extraordinary that Joutel could hardly preserve the gravity which the occasion demanded. Having next embraced the Frenchmen, the elders conducted them into the village, attended by a crowd of warriors and young men; ushered them into their town-hall, a large lodge, devoted to councils, feasts, dances, and other public assemblies; seated them on mats, and squatted in a ring around them. Here they were regaled with sagamite or Indian porridge, corn-cake, beans, bread made of the meal of parched corn, and another kind of bread made of the kernels of nuts and the seed of sunflowers. Then the pipe was lighted, and all smoked together. The four Frenchmen proposed to open a traffic for provisions, and their entertainers grunted assent.

Joutel found a Frenchman in the village. He was a young man from Provence, who had deserted from La Salle on his last journey, and was now, to all appearance, a savage like his adopted countrymen, being naked like them, and affecting to have forgotten his native language. He was very friendly, however, and invited the visitors to a neighboring village, where he lived, and where, as he told them, they would find a better supply of corn. They accordingly set out with him, escorted by a crowd of Indians. They saw lodges and clusters of lodges scattered along their path at intervals, each with its field of corn, beans, and pumpkins, rudely cultivated

with a wooden hoe. Reaching their destination, which was four or five leagues distant, they were greeted with the same honors as at the first village, and, the ceremonial of welcome over, were lodged in the abode of the savage Frenchman. It is not to be supposed, however, that he and his squaws, of whom he had a considerable number, dwelt here alone; for these lodges of the Cenis often contained eight or ten families. They were made by firmly planting in a circle tall, straight young trees, such as grew in the swamps. The tops were then bent inward and lashed together; great numbers of cross-pieces were bound on; and the frame thus constructed was thickly covered with thatch, a hole being left at the top for the escape of the smoke. The inmates were ranged around the circumference of the structure, each family in a kind of stall, open in front, but separated from those adjoining it by partitions of mats. Here they placed their beds of cane, their painted robes of buffalo and deer-skin, their cooking utensils of pottery, and other household goods; and here, too, the head of the family hung his bow, quiver, lance, and shield. There was nothing in common but the fire, which burned in the middle of the lodge, and was never suffered to go out. These dwellings were of great size, and Joutel declares that he has seen some of them sixty feet in diameter.[1]

[1] The lodges of the Florida Indians were somewhat similar. The winter lodges of the now nearly extinct Mandans, though not so high in proportion to their width, and built of more solid ma-

It was in one of the largest that the four travellers were now lodged. A place was assigned them where to bestow their baggage; and they took possession of their quarters amid the silent stares of the whole community. They asked their renegade countryman, the Provençal, if they were safe. He replied that they were; but this did not wholly reassure them, and they spent a somewhat wakeful night. In the morning, they opened their budgets, and began a brisk trade in knives, awls, beads, and other trinkets, which they exchanged for corn and beans. Before evening, they had acquired a considerable stock; and Joutel's three companions declared their intention of returning with it to the camp, leaving him to continue the trade. They went, accordingly, in the morning; and Joutel was left alone. On the one hand, he was glad to be rid of them; on the other, he found his position among the Cenis very irksome, and, as he thought, insecure. Besides the Provençal, who had gone with Liotot and his companions, there were two other French deserters among this tribe, and Joutel was very desirous to see them, hoping that they could tell him the way to the Mississippi;

terials, as the rigor of a northern climate requires, bear a general resemblance to those of the Cenis.

The Cenis tattooed their faces and some parts of their bodies, by pricking powdered charcoal into the skin. The women tattooed the breasts; and this practice was general among them, notwithstanding the pain of the operation, as it was thought very ornamental. Their dress consisted of a sort of frock, or wrapper of skin, from the waist to the knees. The men, in summer, wore nothing but the waist-cloth.

as resolved to escape, at the first opportunity, e company of Duhaut and his accomplices. efore made the present of a knife to a young whom he sent to find the two Frenchmen and them to come to the village. Meanwhile he nued his barter, but under many difficulties; for ould only explain himself by signs, and his cus- ers, though friendly by day, pilfered his goods night. This, joined to the fears and troubles ch burdened his mind, almost deprived him of sleep, and, as he confesses, greatly depressed his its. Indeed, he had little cause for cheerfulness to the past, present, or future. An old Indian, of the patriarchs of the tribe, observing his dejec- and anxious to relieve , one evening brought a young wife, saying t he made him a present ner. She seated herself his side; "but," says tel, "as my head was f ll of other cares and ieties, I said nothing to the poor girl. She waited for a little time; and then, finding that I did not speak a word, she went away."[1]

Late one night, he lay between sleeping and waking on the buffalo-robe that covered his bed of canes. All around the great lodge, its inmates were buried in sleep; and the fire that still burned in the midst cast ghostly gleams on the trophies of savage chivalry — the treasured scalp-locks, the spear and war-club, and shield of whitened bull-hide — that hung by each warrior's resting-place. Such was the weird

[1] *Journal Historique*, 237.

scene that lingered on the dreamy eyes of Joutel, as he closed them at last in a troubled sleep. The sound of a footstep soon wakened him; and, turning, he saw at his side the figure of a naked savage, armed with a bow and arrows. Joutel spoke, but received no answer. Not knowing what to think, he reached out his hand for his pistols; on which the intruder withdrew, and seated himself by the fire. Thither Joutel followed; and as the light fell on his features, he looked at him closely. His face was tattooed, after the Cenis fashion, in lines drawn from the top of the forehead and converging to the chin; and his body was decorated with similar embellishments. Suddenly, this supposed Indian rose and threw his arms around Joutel's neck, making himself known, at the same time, as one of the Frenchmen who had deserted from La Salle and taken refuge among the Cenis. He was a Breton sailor named Ruter. His companion, named Grollet, also a sailor, had been afraid to come to the village lest he should meet La Salle. Ruter expressed surprise and regret when he heard of the death of his late commander. He had deserted him but a few months before. That brief interval had sufficed to transform him into a savage; and both he and his companion found their present reckless and ungoverned way of life greatly to their liking. He could tell nothing of the Mississippi; and on the next day he went home, carrying with him a present of beads for his wives, of which last he had made a large collection.

In a few days he reappeared, bringing Grollet with him. Each wore a bunch of turkey-feathers dangling from his head, and each had wrapped his naked body in a blanket. Three men soon after arrived from Duhaut's camp, commissioned to receive the corn which Joutel had purchased. They told him that Duhaut and Liotot, the tyrants of the party, had resolved to return to Fort St. Louis, and build a vessel to escape to the West Indies, — "a visionary scheme," writes Joutel, "for our carpenters were all dead; and even if they had been alive, they were so ignorant that they would not have known how to go about the work; besides, we had no tools for it. Nevertheless, I was obliged to obey, and set out for the camp with the provisions."

On arriving, he found a wretched state of affairs. Douay and the two Caveliers, who had been treated by Duhaut with great harshness and contempt, had been told to make their mess apart; and Joutel now joined them. This separation restored them their freedom of speech, of which they had hitherto been deprived; but it subjected them to incessant hunger, as they were allowed only food enough to keep them from famishing. Douay says that quarrels were rife among the assassins themselves, — the malcontents being headed by Hiens, who was enraged that Duhaut and Liotot should have engrossed all the plunder. Joutel was helpless, for he had none to back him but two priests and a boy.

He and his companions talked of nothing around

their solitary camp-fire but the means of escaping from the villanous company into which they were thrown. They saw no resource but to find the Mississippi, and thus make their way to Canada, — a prodigious undertaking in their forlorn condition; nor was there any probability that the assassins would permit them to go. These, on their part, were beset with difficulties. They could not return to civilization without manifest peril of a halter; and their only safety was to turn buccaneers or savages. Duhaut, however, still held to his plan of going back to Fort St. Louis; and Joutel and his companions, who with good reason stood in daily fear of him, devised among themselves a simple artifice to escape from his company. The elder Cavelier was to tell him that they were too fatigued for the journey, and wished to stay among the Cenis; and to beg him to allow them a portion of the goods, for which Cavelier was to give his note of hand. The old priest, whom a sacrifice of truth even on less important occasions cost no great effort, accordingly opened the negotiation, and to his own astonishment and that of his companions, gained the assent of Duhaut. Their joy, however, was short; for Ruter, the French savage, to whom Joutel had betrayed his intention, when inquiring the way to the Mississippi, told it to Duhaut, who on this changed front and made the ominous declaration that he and his men would also go to Canada. Joutel and his companions were now filled with alarm; for there was no likelihood that

the assassins would permit them, the witnesses of their crime, to reach the settlements alive. In the midst of their trouble, the sky was cleared as by the crash of a thunderbolt.

Hiens and several others had gone, some time before, to the Cenis villages to purchase horses; and here they had been detained by the charms of the Indian women. During their stay, Hiens heard of Duhaut's new plan of going to Canada by the Mississippi; and he declared to those with him that he would not consent. On a morning early in May he appeared at Duhaut's camp, with Ruter and Grollet, the French savages, and about twenty Indians. Duhaut and Liotot, it is said, were passing the time by practising with bows and arrows in front of their hut. One of them called to Hiens, "Good-morning;" but the buccaneer returned a sullen answer. He then accosted Duhaut, telling him that he had no mind to go up the Mississippi with him, and demanding a share of the goods. Duhaut replied that the goods were his own, since La Salle had owed him money. "So you will not give them to me?" returned Hiens. "No," was the answer. "You are a wretch!" exclaimed Hiens; "you killed my master."[1] And drawing a pistol from his belt he

[1] "Tu es un misérable. Tu as tué mon maistre."—Tonty, *Mémoire*. Tonty derived his information from some of those present. Douay and Joutel have each left an account of this murder. They agree in essential points; though Douay says that when it took place, Duhaut had moved his camp beyond the Cenis villages, which is contrary to Joutel's statement.

fired at Duhaut, who staggered three or four paces and fell dead. Almost at the same instant Ruter fired his gun at Liotot, shot three balls into his body, and stretched him on the ground mortally wounded.

Douay and the two Caveliers stood in extreme terror, thinking that their turn was to come next. Joutel, no less alarmed, snatched his gun to defend himself; but Hiens called to him to fear nothing, declaring that what he had done was only to avenge the death of La Salle, — to which, nevertheless, he had been privy, though not an active sharer in the crime. Liotot lived long enough to make his confession, after which Ruter killed him by exploding a pistol loaded with a blank charge of powder against his head. Duhaut's myrmidon, L'Archevêque, was absent, hunting, and Hiens was for killing him on his return; but the two priests and Joutel succeeded in dissuading him.

The Indian spectators beheld these murders with undisguised amazement, and almost with horror. What manner of men were these who had pierced the secret places of the wilderness to riot in mutual slaughter? Their fiercest warriors might learn a lesson in ferocity from these heralds of civilization. Joutel and his companions, who could not dispense with the aid of the Cenis, were obliged to explain away, as they best might, the atrocity of what they had witnessed.[1]

Hiens, and others of the French, had before

[1] Joutel, *Relation* (Margry, iii. 371).

promised to join the Cenis on an expedition against a neighboring tribe with whom they were at war; and the whole party having removed to the Indian village, the warriors and their allies prepared to depart. Six Frenchmen went with Hiens; and the rest, including Joutel, Douay, and the Caveliers, remained behind, in the lodge where Joutel had been domesticated, and where none were now left but women, children, and old men. Here they remained a week or more, watched closely by the Cenis, who would not let them leave the village; when news at length arrived of a great victory, and the warriors soon after returned with forty-eight scalps. It was the French guns that won the battle, but not the less did they glory in their prowess; and several days were spent in ceremonies and feasts of triumph.[1]

When all this hubbub of rejoicing had subsided, Joutel and his companions broke to Hiens their plan of attempting to reach home by way of the Mississippi. As they had expected, he opposed it vehemently, declaring that for his own part he would not run such a risk of losing his head; but at length he consented to their departure, on condition that the elder Cavelier should give him a certificate of his entire innocence of the murder of La Salle, which the priest did not hesitate to do. For the rest, Hiens treated his departing fellow-travellers with the generosity of a successful free-booter; for he gave them a good

[1] These are described by Joutel. Like nearly all the early observers of Indian manners, he speaks of the practice of cannibalism.

share of the plunder he had won by his late crime, supplying them with hatchets, knives, beads, and other articles of trade, besides several horses. Meanwhile, adds Joutel, "we had the mortification and chagrin of seeing this scoundrel walking about the camp in a scarlet coat laced with gold which had belonged to the late Monsieur de la Salle, and which he had seized upon, as also upon all the rest of his property." A well-aimed shot would have avenged the wrong, but Joutel was clearly a mild and moderate person; and the elder Cavelier had constantly opposed all plans of violence. Therefore they stifled their emotions, and armed themselves with patience.

Joutel's party consisted, besides himself, of the Caveliers (uncle and nephew), Anastase Douay, De Marle, Teissier, and a young Parisian named Barthelemy. Teissier, an accomplice in the murders of Moranget and La Salle, had obtained a pardon, in form, from the elder Cavelier. They had six horses and three Cenis guides. Hiens embraced them at parting, as did the ruffians who remained with him. Their course was northeast, toward the mouth of the Arkansas, — a distant goal, the way to which was beset with so many dangers that their chance of reaching it seemed small. It was early in June, and the forests and prairies were green with the verdure of opening summer.

They soon reached the Assonis, a tribe near the Sabine, who received them well, and gave them guides to the nations dwelling towards Red River.

On the twenty-third, they approached a village, the inhabitants of which, regarding them as curiosities of the first order, came out in a body to see them; and, eager to do them honor, they required them to mount on their backs, and thus make their entrance in procession. Joutel, being large and heavy, weighed down his bearer, insomuch that two of his countrymen were forced to sustain him, one on each side. On arriving, an old chief washed their faces with warm water from an earthen pan, and then invited them to mount on a scaffold of canes, where they sat in the hot sun listening to four successive speeches of welcome, of which they understood not a word.[1]

At the village of another tribe, farther on their way, they met with a welcome still more oppressive. Cavelier, the unworthy successor of his brother, being represented as the chief of the party, became the principal victim of their attentions. They danced the calumet before him; while an Indian, taking him, with an air of great respect, by the shoulders as he sat, shook him in cadence with the thumping of the drum. They then placed two girls close beside him, as his wives; while, at the same time, an old chief tied a painted feather in his hair. These proceedings so scandalized him that, pretend-

[1] These Indians were a portion of the Cadodaquis, or Caddoes, then living on Red River. The travellers afterwards visited other villages of the same people. Tonty was here two years afterwards, and mentions the curious custom of washing the faces of guests.

ing to be ill, he broke off the ceremony; but they continued to sing all night, with so much zeal that several of them were reduced to a state of complete exhaustion.

At length, after a journey of about two months, during which they lost one of their number, — De Marle, accidentally drowned while bathing, — the travellers approached the river Arkansas, at a point not far above its junction with the Mississippi. Led by their Indian guides, they traversed a rich district of plains and woods, and stood at length on the borders of the stream. Nestled beneath the forests of the farther shore, they saw the lodges of a large Indian town; and here, as they gazed across the broad current, they presently descried an object which nerved their spent limbs, and thrilled their homesick hearts with joy. It was a tall, wooden cross; and near it was a small house, built evidently by Christian hands. With one accord they fell on their knees, and raised their hands to Heaven in thanksgiving. Two men, in European dress, issued from the door of the house and fired their guns to salute the excited travellers, who on their part replied with a volley. Canoes put out from the farther shore and ferried them to the town, where they were welcomed by Couture and De Launay, two followers of Henri de Tonty.[1]

That brave, loyal, and generous man, always vigilant and always active, beloved and feared alike by

[1] Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 298.

white men and by red,[1] had been ejected, as we have seen, by the agent of the governor, La Barre, from the command of Fort St. Louis of the Illinois. An order from the King had reinstated him; and he no sooner heard the news of La Salle's landing on the shores of the Gulf, and of the disastrous beginnings of his colony,[2] than he prepared, on his own responsibility and at his own cost, to go to his assistance. He collected twenty-five Frenchmen and eleven Indians, and set out from his fortified rock on the thirteenth of February, 1686;[3] descended the Mississippi, and reached its mouth in Holy Week. All was solitude, a voiceless desolation of river, marsh, and sea. He despatched canoes to the east and to the west, searching the coast for some thirty leagues on either side. Finding no trace of his friend, who at that moment was ranging the prairies of Texas in no less fruitless search of his "fatal river," Tonty wrote for him a letter, which he left

[1] *Journal de St. Cosme*, 1699. This journal has been printed by Mr. Shea, from the copy in my possession. St. Cosme, who knew Tonty well, speaks of him in the warmest terms of praise.

[2] In the autumn of 1685, Tonty made a journey from the Illinois to Michilimackinac, to seek news of La Salle. He there learned, by a letter of the new governor, Denonville, just arrived from France, of the landing of La Salle, and the loss of the "Aimable," as recounted by Beaujeu, on his return. He immediately went back on foot to Fort St. Louis of the Illinois, and prepared to descend the Mississippi, "dans l'espérance de lui donner secours." *Lettre de Tonty au Ministre*, 24 *Aoust*, 1686; *Ibid.*, *à Cabart de Villermont*, *même date*; *Mémoire de Tonty*; *Procès Verbal de Tonty*, 13 *Avril*, 1686.

[3] The date is from the *Procès Verbal*. In the *Mémoire*, hastily written long after, he falls into errors of date.

in the charge of an Indian chief, who preserved it with reverential care, and gave it, fourteen years after, to Iberville, the founder of Louisiana.[1] Deeply disappointed at his failure, Tonty retraced his course, and ascended the Mississippi to the villages of the Arkansas, where some of his men volunteered to remain. He left six of them; and of this number were Couture and De Launay.[2]

Cavelier and his companions, followed by a crowd of Indians, some carrying their baggage, some struggling for a view of the white strangers, entered the log cabin of their two hosts. Rude as it was, they found in it an earnest of peace and safety, and a foretaste of home. Couture and De Launay were moved even to tears by the story of their disasters, and of the catastrophe that crowned them. La Salle's death was carefully concealed from the Indians, many of whom had seen him on his descent of the Mississippi, and who regarded him with prodigious respect. They lavished all their hospitality on his followers; feasted them on corn-bread, dried buffalo meat, and watermelons, and danced the calumet before them, the most august of all their ceremonies. On this occasion, Cavelier's patience

[1] Iberville sent it to France, and Charlevoix gives a portion of it. (*Histoire de la Nouvelle France*, ii. 259.) Singularly enough, the date, as printed by him, is erroneous, being 20 April, 1685, instead of 1686. There is no doubt whatever, from its relations with concurrent events, that this journey was in the latter year.

[2] Tonty, *Mémoire;* Ibid., *Lettre à Monseigneur de Ponchartrain*, 1690. Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 301.

failed him again, and pretending, as before, to be ill, he called on his nephew to take his place. There were solemn dances, too, in which the warriors — some bedaubed with white clay, some with red, and some with both; some wearing feathers, and some the horns of buffalo; some naked, and some in painted shirts of deer-skin, fringed with scalp-locks, insomuch, says Joutel, that they looked like a troop of devils — leaped, stamped, and howled from sunset till dawn. All this was partly to do the travellers honor, and partly to extort presents. They made objections, however, when asked to furnish guides; and it was only by dint of great offers that four were at length procured.

With these, the travellers resumed their journey in a wooden canoe, about the first of August,[1] descended the Arkansas, and soon reached the dark and inexorable river, so long the object of their search, rolling, like a destiny, through its realms of solitude and shade. They launched their canoe on its turbid bosom, plied their oars against the current, and slowly won their way upward, following the writhings of this watery monster through cane-brake, swamp, and fen. It was a hard and toilsome jour-

[1] Joutel says that the Parisian boy, Barthelemy, was left behind. It was this youth who afterwards uttered the ridiculous defamation of La Salle mentioned in a preceding note. The account of the death of La Salle, taken from the lips of Couture, was received by him from Cavelier and his companions, during their stay at the Arkansas. Couture was by trade a carpenter, and was a native of Rouen.

ney, under the sweltering sun of August, — now on the water, now knee-deep in mud, dragging their canoe through the unwholesome jungle. On the nineteenth, they passed the mouth of the Ohio; and their Indian guides made it an offering of buffalo meat. On the first of September, they passed the Missouri, and soon after saw Marquette's pictured rock, and the line of craggy heights on the east shore, marked on old French maps as "the Ruined Castles." Then, with a sense of relief, they turned from the great river into the peaceful current of the Illinois. They were eleven days in ascending it, in their large and heavy wooden canoe; when at length, on the afternoon of the fourteenth of September, they saw, towering above the forest and the river, the cliff crowned with the palisades of Fort St. Louis of the Illinois. As they drew near, a troop of Indians, headed by a Frenchman, descended from the rock, and fired their guns to salute them. They landed, and followed the forest path that led towards the fort, when they were met by Boisrondet, Tonty's comrade in the Iroquois war, and two other Frenchmen, who no sooner saw them than they called out, demanding where was La Salle. Cavelier, fearing lest he and his party would lose the advantage they might derive from his character of representative of his brother, was determined to conceal his death; and Joutel, as he himself confesses, took part in the deceit. Substituting equivocation for falsehood, they replied that La Salle had been with them nearly

as far as the Cenis villages, and that, when they parted, he was in good health. This, so far as they were concerned, was, literally speaking, true; but Douay and Teissier, the one a witness and the other a sharer in his death, could not have said so much without a square falsehood, and therefore evaded the inquiry.

Threading the forest path, and circling to the rear of the rock, they climbed the rugged height, and reached the top. Here they saw an area, encircled by the palisades that fenced the brink of the cliff, and by several dwellings, a store-house, and a chapel. There were Indian lodges too; for some of the red allies of the French made their abode with them.[1] Tonty was absent, fighting the Iroquois; but his lieutenant, Bellefontaine, received the travellers, and his little garrison of bush-rangers greeted them with a salute of musketry, mingled with the whooping of the Indians. A *Te Deum* followed at the chapel; "and, with all our hearts," says Joutel, "we gave thanks to God, who had preserved and guided us." At length, the tired travellers were among countrymen and friends. Bellefontaine found a room for the two priests; while Joutel, Teissier, and young Cavelier were lodged in the store-house.

The Jesuit Allouez was lying ill at the fort; and

[1] The condition of Fort St. Louis, at this time, may be gathered from several passages of Joutel. The houses, he says, were built at the brink of the cliff, forming, with the palisades, the circle of defence. The Indians lived in the area.

Joutel, Cavelier, and Douay went to visit him. He showed great anxiety when told that La Salle was alive, and on his way to the Illinois; asked many questions, and could not hide his agitation. When, some time after, he had partially recovered, he left St. Louis, as if to shun a meeting with the object of his alarm.[1] Once before, in 1679, Allouez had fled

[1] Joutel adds that this was occasioned by "une espèce de conspiration qu'on a voulu faire contre les interests de Monsieur de la Salle." — *Journal Historique*, 350.

"Ce Père appréhendoit que le dit sieur ne l'y rencontrast, . . . suivant ce que j'en ai pu apprendre, les Pères avoient avancé plusieurs choses pour contrebarrer l'entreprise et avoient voulu détacher plusieurs nations de Sauvages, lesquelles s'estoient données à M. de la Salle. Ils avoient esté mesme jusques à vouloir destruire le fort Saint-Louis, en ayant construit un à Chicago, où ils avoient attiré une partie des Sauvages, ne pouvant en quelque façon s'emparer du dit fort. Pour conclure, le bon Père ayant eu peur d'y estre trouvé, aima mieux se précautionner en prenant le devant. . . . Quoyque M. Cavelier eust dit au Père qu'il pouvoit rester, il partit quelques sept ou huit jours avant nous." — *Relation* (Margry, iii. 500).

La Salle always saw the influence of the Jesuits in the disasters that befell him. His repeated assertion, that they wished to establish themselves in the valley of the Mississippi, receives confirmation from a document entitled *Mémoire sur la proposition à faire par les R. Pères Jésuites pour la découverte des environs de la rivière du Mississipi et pour voir si elle est navigable jusqu'à la mer.* It is a memorandum of propositions to be made to the minister Seignelay, and was apparently put forward as a feeler, before making the propositions in form. It was written after the return of Beaujeu to France, and before La Salle's death became known. It intimates that the Jesuits were entitled to precedence in the valley of the Mississippi, as having first explored it. It affirms that *La Salle had made a blunder, and landed his colony, not at the mouth of the river, but at another place;* and it asks permission to continue the work in which he has failed. To this end, it petitions for means to build a vessel at St. Louis of the Illinois, together with canoes, arms,

from the Illinois on hearing of the approach of La Salle.

The season was late, and they were eager to hasten forward that they might reach Quebec in time to return to France in the autumn ships. There was not a day to lose. They bade farewell to Bellefontaine, from whom, as from all others, they had concealed the death of La Salle, and made their way across the country to Chicago. Here they were detained a week by a storm; and when at length they embarked in a canoe furnished by Bellefontaine, the tempest soon forced them to put back. On this, they abandoned their design, and returned to Fort St. Louis, to the astonishment of its inmates.

It was October when they arrived; and, meanwhile, Tonty had returned from the Iroquois war, where he had borne a conspicuous part in the famous attack on the Senecas by the Marquis de Denonville.[1] He listened with deep interest to the mournful story of his guests. Cavelier knew him well. He knew, so far as he was capable of knowing, his generous and disinterested character, his long and faithful

tents, tools, provisions, and merchandise for the Indians; and it also asks for La Salle's maps and papers, and for those of Beaujeu. On their part, it pursues, the Jesuits will engage to make a complete survey of the river, and return an exact account of its inhabitants, its plants, and its other productions.

[1] Tonty, Du Lhut, and Durantaye came to the aid of Denonville with a hundred and eighty Frenchmen, chiefly *coureurs de bois*, and four hundred Indians from the upper country. Their services were highly appreciated; and Tonty especially is mentioned in the despatches of Denonville with great praise.

attachment to La Salle, and the invaluable services he had rendered him. Tonty had every claim on his confidence and affection. Yet he did not hesitate to practise on him the same deceit which he had practised on Bellefontaine. He told him that he had left his brother in good health on the Gulf of Mexico, and drew upon him, in La Salle's name, for an amount stated by Joutel at about four thousand livres, in furs, besides a canoe and a quantity of other goods, all of which were delivered to him by the unsuspecting victim.[1]

This was at the end of the winter, when the old priest and his companions had been living for months on Tonty's hospitality. They set out for Canada on

[1] "Monsieur Tonty, croyant M. de la Salle vivant, ne fit pas de difficulté de luy donner pour environ quatre mille liv. de pelleterie, de castors, loutres, un canot, et autres effets." — Joutel, *Journal Historique*, 349.

Tonty himself does not make the amount so great: "Sur ce qu'ils m'assuroient qu'il étoit resté au Golfe de Mexique en bonne santé, je les reçus comme si ç'avoit esté lui mesme et luy prestay [à *Cavelier*] plus de 700 francs." — Tonty, *Mémoire*.

Cavelier must have known that La Salle was insolvent. Tonty had long served without pay. Douay says that he made the stay of the party at the fort very agreeable, and speaks of him, with some apparent compunction, as "ce brave gentilhomme, toujours inséparablement attaché aux intérêts du Sieur de la Salle, dont nous luy avons caché la déplorable destinée."

Couture, from the Arkansas, brought word to Tonty, several months after, of La Salle's death, adding that Cavelier had concealed it, with no other purpose than that of gaining money or supplies from him (Tonty), in his brother's name. Cavelier had a letter from La Salle, desiring Tonty to give him supplies, and pay him 2,652 livres in beaver. If Cavelier is to be believed, this beaver belonged to La Salle.

the twenty-first of March, reached Chicago on the twenty-ninth, and thence proceeded to Michilimackinac. Here Cavelier sold some of Tonty's furs to a merchant, who gave him in payment a draft on Montreal, thus putting him in funds for his voyage home. The party continued their journey in canoes by way of French River and the Ottawa, and safely reached Montreal on the seventeenth of July. Here they procured the clothing of which they were wofully in need, and then descended the river to Quebec, where they took lodging, — some with the Récollet friars, and some with the priests of the Seminary, — in order to escape the questions of the curious. At the end of August they embarked for France, and early in October arrived safely at Rochelle. None of the party were men of especial energy or force of character; and yet, under the spur of a dire necessity, they had achieved one of the most adventurous journeys on record.

Now, at length, they disburdened themselves of their gloomy secret; but the sole result seems to have been an order from the King for the arrest of the murderers, should they appear in Canada.[1]

[1] *Lettre du Roy à Denonville*, 1 *Mai*, 1689. Joutel must have been a young man at the time of the Mississippi expedition; for Charlevoix saw him at Rouen, thirty-five years after. He speaks of him with emphatic praise; but it must be admitted that his connivance in the deception practised by Cavelier on Tonty leaves a shade on his character, as well as on that of Douay. In other respects, everything that appears concerning him is highly favorable, which is not the case with Douay, who, on one or two occasions, makes wilful misstatements.

Douay says that the elder Cavelier made a report of the expedi-

Joutel was disappointed. It had been his hope throughout that the King would send a ship to the relief of the wretched band at Fort St. Louis of Texas. But Louis XIV. hardened his heart, and left them to their fate.

tion to the minister Seignelay. This report remained unknown in an English collection of autographs and old manuscripts, whence I obtained it by purchase, in 1854, both the buyer and seller being at the time ignorant of its exact character. It proved, on examination, to be a portion of the first draft of Cavelier's report to Seignelay. It consists of twenty-six small folio pages, closely written in a clear hand, though in a few places obscured by the fading of the ink, as well as by occasional erasures and interlineations of the writer. It is, as already stated, confused and unsatisfactory in its statements; and all the latter part has been lost. On reaching France, he had the impudence to tell Abbé Tronson, Superior of St. Sulpice, "qu'il avait laissé M. de la Salle dans un très-beau pays avec M. de Chefdeville en bonne santé." — *Lettre de Tronson à Mad. Fauvel-Cavelier*, 29 *Nov.*, 1688.

Cavelier addressed to the King a memorial on the importance of keeping possession of the Illinois. It closes with an earnest petition for money in compensation for his losses, as, according to his own statement, he was completely *épuisé*. It is affirmed in a memorial of the heirs of his cousin, François Plet, that he concealed the death of La Salle some time after his return to France, in order to get possession of property which would otherwise have been seized by the creditors of the deceased. The prudent abbé died rich and very old, at the house of a relative, having inherited a large estate after his return from America. Apparently, this did not satisfy him; for there is before me the copy of a petition, written about 1717, in which he asks, jointly with one of his nephews, to be given possession of the seigniorial property held by La Salle in America. The petition was refused.

Young Cavelier, La Salle's nephew, died some years after, an officer in a regiment. He has been erroneously supposed to be the same with one De la Salle, whose name is appended to a letter giving an account of Louisiana, and dated at Toulon, 3 Sept., 1698. This person was the son of a naval official at Toulon, and was not related to the Caveliers.

CHAPTER XXIX.

1688–1689.

FATE OF THE TEXAN COLONY.

TONTY ATTEMPTS TO RESCUE THE COLONISTS: HIS DIFFICULTIES AND HARDSHIPS.—SPANISH HOSTILITY.—EXPEDITION OF ALONZO DE LEON: HE REACHES FORT ST. LOUIS.—A SCENE OF HAVOC.—DESTRUCTION OF THE FRENCH.—THE END.

HENRI DE TONTY, on his rock of St. Louis, was visited in September by Couture and two Indians from the Arkansas. Then, for the first time, he heard with grief and indignation of the death of La Salle, and the deceit practised by Cavelier. The chief whom he had served so well was beyond his help; but might not the unhappy colonists left on the shores of Texas still be rescued from destruction? Couture had confirmed what Cavelier and his party had already told him, that the tribes south of the Arkansas were eager to join the French in an invasion of northern Mexico; and he soon after received from the governor, Denonville, a letter informing him that war had again been declared against Spain. As bold and enterprising as La Salle himself, Tonty resolved on an effort to learn the condition of the

few Frenchmen left on the borders of the Gulf, relieve their necessities, and, should it prove practicable, make them the nucleus of a war-party to cross the Rio Grande, and add a new province to the domain of France. It was the revival, on a small scale, of La Salle's scheme of Mexican invasion; and there is no doubt that, with a score of French musketeers, he could have gathered a formidable party of savage allies from the tribes of Red River, the Sabine, and the Trinity. This daring adventure and the rescue of his suffering countrymen divided his thoughts, and he prepared at once to execute the double purpose.[1]

He left Fort St. Louis of the Illinois early in December, in a pirogue, or wooden canoe, with five Frenchmen, a Shawanoe warrior, and two Indian slaves; and, after a long and painful journey, he reached the villages of the Caddoes on Red River on the twenty-eighth of March. Here he was told that Hiens and his companions were at a village eighty leagues distant; and thither he was preparing to go in search of them, when all his men, excepting the Shawanoe and one Frenchman, declared themselves disgusted with the journey, and refused to follow him. Persuasion was useless, and there was no means of enforcing obedience. He found himself abandoned; but he still pushed on, with the two who remained faithful. A few days after, they lost nearly all their ammunition in crossing a river.

[1] Tonty, *Mémoire.*

Undeterred by this accident, Tonty made his way to the village where Hiens and those who had remained with him were said to be; but no trace of them appeared, and the demeanor of the Indians, when he inquired for them, convinced him that they had been put to death. He charged them with having killed the Frenchmen, whereupon the women of the village raised a wail of lamentation; "and I saw," he says, "that what I had said to them was true." They refused to give him guides; and this, with the loss of his ammunition, compelled him to forego his purpose of making his way to the colonists on the Bay of St. Louis. With bitter disappointment, he and his two companions retraced their course, and at length approached Red River. Here they found the whole country flooded. Sometimes they waded to the knees, sometimes to the neck, sometimes pushed their slow way on rafts. Night and day it rained without ceasing. They slept on logs placed side by side to raise them above the mud and water, and fought their way with hatchets through the inundated cane-brakes. They found no game but a bear, which had taken refuge on an island in the flood; and they were forced to eat their dogs. "I never in my life," writes Tonty, "suffered so much." In judging these intrepid exertions, it is to be remembered that he was not, at least in appearance, of a robust constitution, and that he had but one hand. They reached the Mississippi on the eleventh of July, and the Arkansas villages on the

thirty-first. Here Tonty was detained by an attack of fever. He resumed his journey when it began to abate, and reached his fort of the Illinois in September.[1]

[1] Two causes have contributed to detract, most unjustly, from Tonty's reputation, — the publication, under his name, but without his authority, of a perverted account of the enterprises in which he took part; and the confounding him with his brother, Alphonse de Tonty, who long commanded at Detroit, where charges of peculation were brought against him. There are very few names in French-American history mentioned with such unanimity of praise as that of Henri de Tonty. Hennepin finds some fault with him; but his censure is commendation. The despatches of the governor, Denonville, speak in strong terms of his services in the Iroquois war, praise his character, and declare that he is fit for any bold enterprise, adding that he deserves reward from the King. The missionary, St. Cosme, who travelled under his escort in 1699, says of him: "He is beloved by all the *voyageurs*. . . . It was with deep regret that we parted from him: . . . he is the man who best knows the country; . . . he is loved and feared everywhere. . . . Your grace will, I doubt not, take pleasure in acknowledging the obligations we owe him."

Tonty held the commission of captain; but, by a memoir which he addressed to Ponchartrain in 1690, it appears that he had never received any pay. Count Frontenac certifies the truth of the statement, and adds a recommendation of the writer. In consequence, probably, of this, the proprietorship of Fort St. Louis of the Illinois was granted in the same year to Tonty, jointly with La Forest, formerly La Salle's lieutenant. Here they carried on a trade in furs. In 1699, a royal declaration was launched against the *coureurs de bois;* but an express provision was added in favor of Tonty and La Forest, who were empowered to send up the country yearly two canoes, with twelve men, for the maintenance of this fort. With such a limitation, this fort and the trade carried on at it must have been very small. In 1702, we find a royal order, to the effect that La Forest is henceforth to reside in Canada, and Tonty on the Mississippi; and that the establishment at the Illinois is to be discontinued. In the same year, Tonty joined D'Iberville in Lower Louisiana, and was sent by that officer from Mobile to secure the

While the King of France abandoned the exiles of Texas to their fate, a power dark, ruthless, and terrible was hovering around the feeble colony on the Bay of St. Louis, searching with pitiless eye to discover and tear out that dying germ of civilization from the bosom of the wilderness in whose savage immensity it lay hidden. Spain claimed the Gulf of Mexico and all its coasts as her own of unanswerable right, and the viceroys of Mexico were strenuous to enforce her claim. The capture of one of La Salle's four vessels at St. Domingo had made known his designs, and in the course of the three succeeding years no less than four expeditions were sent out from Vera Cruz to find and destroy him. They scoured the whole extent of the coast, and found the wrecks of the "Aimable" and the "Belle;" but the colony of St. Louis,[1] inland and secluded, escaped their search. For a time, the jealousy of the Spaniards was lulled to sleep. They rested in the assurance that the intruders had perished, when fresh advices from the frontier province of New Leon

Chickasaws in the French interest. His subsequent career and the time of his death do not appear. He seems never to have received the reward which his great merit deserved. Those intimate with the late lamented Dr. Sparks will remember his often-expressed wish that justice should be done to the memory of Tonty.

Fort St. Louis of the Illinois was afterwards reoccupied by the French. In 1718, a number of them, chiefly traders, were living here; but three years later it was again deserted, and Charlevoix, passing the spot, saw only the remains of its palisades.

[1] Fort St. Louis of Texas is not to be confounded with Fort St. Louis of the Illinois.

caused the Viceroy, Galve, to order a strong force, under Alonzo de Leon, to march from Coahuila, and cross the Rio Grande. Guided by a French prisoner, probably one of the deserters from La Salle, they pushed their way across wild and arid plains, rivers, prairies, and forests, till at length they approached the Bay of St. Louis, and descried, far off, the harboring-place of the French.[1] As they drew near, no banner was displayed, no sentry challenged; and the silence of death reigned over the shattered palisades and neglected dwellings. The Spaniards spurred their reluctant horses through the gateway, and a scene of desolation met their sight. No living thing was stirring. Doors were torn from their hinges; broken boxes, staved barrels, and rusty kettles, mingled with a great number of stocks of arquebuses and muskets, were scattered about in confusion. Here, too, trampled in mud and soaked with rain, they saw more than two hundred books, many of which still retained the traces of costly bindings. On the adjacent prairie lay three dead bodies, one of which, from fragments of dress still clinging to the wasted remains, they saw to be that of a woman. It was in vain to question the imper-

[1] After crossing the Del Norte, they crossed in turn the Upper Nueces, the Hondo (Rio Frio), the De Leon (San Antonio), and the Guadalupe, and then, turning southward, descended to the Bay of St. Bernard. . . . Manuscript map of "Route que firent les Espagnols, pour venir enlever les Français restez à la Baye St. Bernard ou St. Louis, après la perte du vaisseau de Mr. de la Salle, en 1689." (Margry's collection.)

turbable savages, who, wrapped to the throat in their buffalo-robes, stood gazing on the scene with looks of wooden immobility. Two strangers, however, at length arrived.[1] Their faces were smeared with paint, and they were wrapped in buffalo-robes like the rest; yet these seeming Indians were L'Archevêque, the tool of La Salle's murderer Duhaut, and Grollet, the companion of the white savage Ruter. The Spanish commander, learning that these two men were in the district of the tribe called Texas,[2] had sent to invite them to his camp under a pledge of good treatment; and they had resolved to trust Spanish clemency rather than endure longer a life that had become intolerable. From them the Spaniards learned nearly all that is known of the fate of Barbier, Zenobe Membré, and their companions. Three months before, a large band of Indians had approached the fort, the inmates of which had suffered severely from the ravages of the small-pox. From fear of treachery, they refused to admit their visitors, but received them at a cabin without the palisades. Here the French began a trade with them; when suddenly a band of warriors, yelling

[1] May 1st. The Spaniards reached the fort April 22.

[2] This is the first instance in which the name occurs. In a letter written by a member of De Leon's party, the Texan Indians are mentioned several times. (See *Coleccion de Varios Documentos*, 25.) They are described as an agricultural tribe, and were, to all appearance, identical with the Cenis. The name Tejas, or Texas, was first applied as a local designation to a spot on the river Neches, in the Cenis territory, whence it extended to the whole country. (See Yoakum, *History of Texas*, 52.)

the war-whoop, rushed from an ambuscade under the bank of the river, and butchered the greater number. The children of one Talon, together with an Italian and a young man from Paris named Breman, were saved by the Indian women, who carried them off on their backs. L'Archevêque and Grollet, who with others of their stamp were domesticated in the Indian villages, came to the scene of slaughter, and, as they affirmed, buried fourteen dead bodies.[1]

[1] *Derrotero de la Jornada que hizo el General Alonso de Leon para el descubrimiento de la Bahia del Espíritu Santo, y poblacion de Franceses. Ano de* 1689. — This is the official journal of the expedition, signed by Alonzo de Leon. I am indebted to Colonel Thomas Aspinwall for the opportunity of examining it. The name of Espiritu Santo was, as before mentioned, given by the Spaniards to St. Louis, or Matagorda Bay, as well as to two other bays of the Gulf of Mexico.

Carta en que se da noticia de un viaje hecho á la Bahia de Espíritu Santo y de la poblacion que tenian ahi los Franceses. Coleccion de Varios Documentos para la Historia de la Florida, 25. — This is a letter from a person accompanying the expedition of De Leon. It is dated May 18, 1689, and agrees closely with the journal cited above, though evidently by another hand. Compare Barcia, *Ensayo Cronologico*, 294. Barcia's story has been doubted; but these authentic documents prove the correctness of his principal statements, though on minor points he seems to have indulged his fancy.

The Viceroy of New Spain, in a report to the King, 1690, says that, in order to keep the Texas and other Indians of that region in obedience to his Majesty, he has resolved to establish eight missions among them. He adds that he has appointed as governor, or commander, in that province, Don Domingo Teran de los Rios, who will make a thorough exploration of it, carry out what De Leon has begun, prevent the further intrusion of foreigners like La Salle, and go in pursuit of the remnant of the French, who are said still to remain among the tribes of Red River. I owe this document to the kindness of Mr. Buckingham Smith.

L'Archevêque and Grollet were sent to Spain, where, in spite of the pledge given them, they were thrown into prison, with the intention of sending them back to labor in the mines. The Indians, some time after De Leon's expedition, gave up their captives to the Spaniards. The Italian was imprisoned at Vera Cruz. Breman's fate is unknown. Pierre and Jean Baptiste Talon, who were now old enough to bear arms, were enrolled in the Spanish navy, and, being captured in 1696 by a French ship of war, regained their liberty; while their younger brothers and their sister were carried to Spain by the Viceroy.[1] With respect to the ruffian companions of Hiens, the conviction of Tonty that they had been put to death by the Indians may have been well founded; but the buccaneer himself is said to have been killed in a quarrel with his accomplice Ruter, the white savage; and thus in ignominy and darkness died the last embers of the doomed colony of La Salle.

Here ends the wild and mournful story of the explorers of the Mississippi. Of all their toil and

[1] *Mémoire sur lequel on a interrogé les deux Canadiens [Pierre et Jean Baptiste Talon] qui sont soldats dans la Compagnie de Feuguerolles. A Brest*, 14 *Février*, 1698.

Interrogations faites à Pierre et Jean Baptiste Talon à leur arrivée de la Veracrux. — This paper, which differs in some of its details from the preceding, was sent by D'Iberville, the founder of Louisiana, to Abbé Cavelier. Appended to it is a letter from D'Iberville, written in May, 1704, in which he confirms the chief statements of the Talons, by information obtained by him from a Spanish officer at Pensacola.

sacrifice, no fruit remained but a great geographical discovery, and a grand type of incarnate energy and will. Where La Salle had ploughed, others were to sow the seed; and on the path which the undespairing Norman had hewn out, the Canadian D'Iberville was to win for France a vast though a transient dominion.

APPENDIX.

I.

EARLY UNPUBLISHED MAPS OF THE MISSISSIPPI AND THE GREAT LAKES.

Most of the maps described below are to be found in the Dépôt des Cartes de la Marine et des Colonies, at Paris. Taken together, they exhibit the progress of western discovery, and illustrate the records of the explorers.

1. The map of Galinée, 1670, has a double title,— *Carte du Canada et des Terres découuertes vers le lac Derié*, and *Carte du Lac Ontario et des habitations qui l'enuironnent ensemble le pays que Messrs. Dolier et Galinée, missionnaires du seminaires de St. Sulpice, ont parcouru.* It professes to represent only the country actually visited by the two missionaries. Beginning with Montreal, it gives the course of the Upper St. Lawrence and the shores of Lake Ontario, the river Niagara, the north shore of Lake Erie, the Strait of Detroit, and the eastern and northern shores of Lake Huron. Galinée did not know the existence of the peninsula of Michigan, and merges Lakes Huron and Michigan into one, under the name of "Michigané, ou Mer Douce des Hurons." He was also entirely ignorant of the south shore of Lake Erie. He represents the outlet of Lake Superior as far as the Saut Ste.

Marie, and lays down the river Ottawa in great detail, having descended it on his return. The Falls of the Genesee are indicated, as also the Falls of Niagara, with the inscription, "Sault qui tombe au rapport des sauvages de plus de 200 pieds de haut." Had the Jesuits been disposed to aid him, they could have given him much additional information, and corrected his most serious errors; as, for example, the omission of the peninsula of Michigan. The first attempt to map out the Great Lakes was that of Champlain, in 1632. This of Galinée may be called the second.

2. The map of Lake Superior, published in the Jesuit Relation of 1670, 1671, was made at about the same time with Galinée's map. Lake Superior is here styled "Lac Tracy, ou Supérieur." Though not so exact as it has been represented, this map indicates that the Jesuits had explored every part of this fresh-water ocean, and that they had a thorough knowledge of the straits connecting the three Upper Lakes, and of the adjacent bays, inlets, and shores. The peninsula of Michigan, ignored by Galinée, is represented in its proper place.

3. Three years or more after Galinée made the map mentioned above, another, indicating a greatly increased knowledge of the country, was made by some person whose name does not appear. This map, which is somewhat more than four feet long and about two feet and a half wide, has no title. All the Great Lakes, through their entire extent, are laid down on it with considerable accuracy. Lake Ontario is called "Lac Ontario, ou de Frontenac." Fort Frontenac is indicated, as well as the Iroquois colonies of the north shore. Niagara is "Chute haute de 120 toises par où le Lac Erié tombe dans le Lac Frontenac." Lake Erie is "Lac Teiocha-rontiong, dit communément Lac Erié." Lake St. Clair is "Tsiketo, ou Lac de la Chaudière." Lake Huron is "Lac Huron, ou Mer Douce des Hurons."

Lake Superior is "Lac Supérieur." Lake Michigan is "Lac Mitchiganong, ou des Illinois." On Lake Michigan, immediately opposite the site of Chicago, are written the words, of which the following is the literal translation: "The largest vessels can come to this place from the outlet of Lake Erie, where it discharges into Lake Frontenac [Ontario]; and from this marsh into which they can enter there is only a distance of a thousand paces to the River La Divine [Des Plaines], which can lead them to the River Colbert [Mississippi], and thence to the Gulf of Mexico." This map was evidently made after that voyage of La Salle in which he discovered the Illinois, or at least the Des Plaines branch of it. The Ohio is laid down with the inscription, "River Ohio, so called by the Iroquois on account of its beauty, which the Sieur de la Salle descended." (*Ante*, i. 32, *note*.)

4. We now come to the map of Marquette, which is a rude sketch of a portion of Lakes Superior and Michigan, and of the route pursued by him and Joliet up the Fox River of Green Bay, down the Wisconsin, and thence down the Mississippi as far as the Arkansas. The river Illinois is also laid down, as it was by this course that he returned to Lake Michigan after his memorable voyage. He gives no name to the Wisconsin. The Mississippi is called "Rivière de la Conception;" the Missouri, the Pekitanoui; and the Ohio, the Ouabouskiaou, though La Salle, its discoverer, had previously given it its present name, borrowed from the Iroquois. The Illinois is nameless, like the Wisconsin. At the mouth of a river, perhaps the Des Moines, Marquette places the three villages of the Peoria Indians visited by him. These, with the Kaskaskias, Maroas, and others, on the map, were merely sub-tribes of the aggregation of savages known as the Illinois. On or near the Missouri he places the Ouchage (Osages), the Oumes-

sourit (Missouris), the Kansa (Kanzas), the Paniassa (Pawnees), the Maha (Omahas), and the Pahoutet (Pah-Utahs?). The names of many other tribes, "esloignées dans les terres," are also given along the course of the Arkansas, a river which is nameless on the map. Most of these tribes are now indistinguishable. This map has recently been engraved and published.

5. Not long after Marquette's return from the Mississippi, another map was made by the Jesuits, with the following title: *Carte de la nouvelle decouverte que les peres Iesuites ont fait en l'année* 1672, *et continuée par le P. Iacques Marquette de la mesme Compagnie accompagné de quelques françois en l'année* 1673, *qu'on pourra nommer en françois la Manitoumie.* This title is very elaborately decorated with figures drawn with a pen, and representing Jesuits instructing Indians. The map is the same published by Thevenot, not without considerable variations, in 1681. It represents the Mississippi from a little above the Wisconsin to the Gulf of Mexico, the part below the Arkansas being drawn from conjecture. The river is named "Mitchisipi, ou grande Rivière." The Wisconsin, the Illinois, the Ohio, the Des Moines (?), the Missouri, and the Arkansas are all represented, but in a very rude manner. Marquette's route, in going and returning, is marked by lines; but the return route is incorrect. The whole map is so crude and careless, and based on information so inexact, that it is of little interest.

6. The Jesuits made also another map, without title, of the four Upper Lakes and the Mississippi to a little below the Arkansas. The Mississippi is called "Riuuiere Colbert." The map is remarkable as including the earliest representation of the Upper Mississippi, based, perhaps, on the reports of Indians. The Falls of St. Anthony are indicated by the word "Saut." It is possible that the map

may be of later date than at first appears, and that it may have been drawn in the interval between the return of Hennepin from the Upper Mississippi and that of La Salle from his discovery of the mouth of the river. The various temporary and permanent stations of the Jesuits are marked by crosses.

7. Of far greater interest is the small map of Louis Joliet made and presented to Count Frontenac after the discoverer's return from the Mississippi. It is entitled *Carte de la decouuerte du Sr Jolliet ou l'on voit La Communication du fleuue St. Laurens auec les lacs frontenac, Erié, Lac des Hurons et Ilinois.* Then succeeds the following, written in the same antiquated French, as if it were a part of the title: "Lake Frontenac [Ontario] is separated by a fall of half a league from Lake Erié, from which one enters that of the Hurons, and by the same navigation, into that of the Illinois [Michigan], from the head of which one crosses to the Divine River [Rivière Divine; *i. e.*, the Des Plaines branch of the river Illinois], by a portage of a thousand paces. This river falls into the river Colbert [Mississippi], which discharges itself into the Gulf of Mexico." A part of this map is based on the Jesuit map of Lake Superior, the legends being here for the most part identical, though the shape of the lake is better given by Joliet. The Mississippi, or "Riuiere Colbert," is made to flow from three lakes in latitude 47°; and it ends in latitude 37°, a little below the mouth of the Ohio, the rest being apparently cut off to make room for Joliet's letter to Frontenac (*ante*, i. 76), which is written on the lower part of the map. The valley of the Mississippi is called on the map "Colbertie, ou Amerique Occidentale." The Missouri is represented without name, and against it is a legend, of which the following is the literal translation: "By one of these great rivers which come from the west and discharge themselves into the river Colbert,

one will find a way to enter the Vermilion Sea (Gulf of California). I have seen a village which was not more than twenty days' journey by land from a nation which has commerce with those of California. If I had come two days sooner, I should have spoken with those who had come from thence, and had brought four hatchets as a present." The Ohio has no name, but a legend over it states that La Salle had descended it. (See *ante*, i. 32, *note*).

8. Joliet, at about the same time, made another map, larger than that just mentioned, but not essentially different. The letter to Frontenac is written upon both. There is a third map, of which the following is the title: *Carte generalle de la France septentrionale contenant la descouuerte du pays des Illinois, faite par le Sr Jolliet.* This map, which is inscribed with a dedication by the Intendant Duchesneau to the minister Colbert, was made some time after the voyage of Joliet and Marquette. It is an elaborate piece of work, but very inaccurate. It represents the continent from Hudson's Strait to Mexico and California, with the whole of the Atlantic and a part of the Pacific coast. An open sea is made to extend from Hudson's Strait westward to the Pacific. The St. Lawrence and all the Great Lakes are laid down with tolerable correctness, as also is the Gulf of Mexico. The Mississippi, called "Messasipi," flows into the Gulf, from which it extends northward nearly to the "Mer du Nord." Along its course, above the Wisconsin, which is called "Miskous," is a long list of Indian tribes, most of which cannot now be recognized, though several are clearly sub-tribes of the Sioux. The Ohio is called "Ouaboustikou." The whole map is decorated with numerous figures of animals, natives of the country, or supposed to be so. Among them are camels, ostriches, and a giraffe, which are placed on the plains west

of the Mississippi. But the most curious figure is that which represents one of the monsters seen by Joliet and Marquette, painted on a rock by the Indians. It corresponds with Marquette's description (*ante*, i. 68). This map, which is an early effort of the engineer Franquelin, does more credit to his skill as a designer than to his geographical knowledge, which appears in some respects behind his time.

9. *Carte de l'Amérique Septentrionale depuis l'embouchure de la Rivière St. Laurens jusques au Sein Mexique.* On this curious little map, the Mississippi is called "Riuiere Buade" (the family name of Frontenac); and the neighboring country is "La Frontenacie." The Illinois is "Riuiere de la Diuine ou Loutrelaise," and the Arkansas is "Riuiere Bazire." The Mississippi is made to head in three lakes, and to discharge itself into "B. du S. Esprit" (Mobile Bay). Some of the legends and the orthography of various Indian names are clearly borrowed from Marquette. This map appears to be the work of Raudin, Frontenac's engineer. I owe a tracing of it to the kindness of Henry Harrisse, Esq.

10. *Carte des Parties les plus occidentales du Canada, par le Père Pierre Raffeix*, S. J. This rude map shows the course of Du Lhut from the head of Lake Superior to the Mississippi, and partly confirms the story of Hennepin, who, Raffeix says in a note, was rescued by Du Lhut. The course of Joliet and Marquette is given, with the legend "Voyage et première descouverte du Mississipy faite par le P. Marquette et M^r. Joliet en 1672." The route of La Salle in 1679, 1680, is also laid down.

11. In the Dépôt des Cartes de la Marine is another map of the Upper Mississippi, which seems to have been made by or for Du Lhut. Lac Buade, the "Issatis," the "Tintons," the "Houelbatons," the "Poualacs," and other tribes

of this region appear upon it. This is the map numbered 208 in the *Cartographie* of Harrisse.

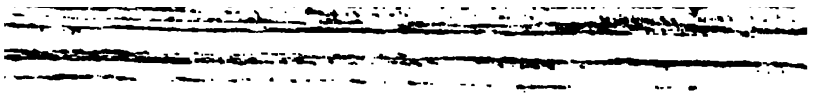
12. Another map deserving mention is a large and fine one, entitled *Carte de l'Amérique Septentrionale et partie de la Meridionale . . . avec les nouvelles decouvertes de la Riviere Missisipi, ou Colbert.* It appears to have been made in 1682 or 1683, before the descent of La Salle to the mouth of the Mississippi was known to the maker, who seems to have been Franquelin. The lower Mississippi is omitted, but its upper portions are elaborately laid down; and the name *La Louisiane* appears in large gold letters along its west side. The Falls of St. Anthony are shown, and above them is written "Armes du Roy gravées sur cet arbre l'an 1679." This refers to the *acte de prise de possession* of Du Lhut in July of that year, and this part of the map seems made from data supplied by him.

13. We now come to the great map of Franquelin, the most remarkable of all the early maps of the interior of North America, though hitherto completely ignored by both American and Canadian writers. It is entitled *Carte de la Louisiane ou des Voyages du S.r de la Salle et des pays qu'il a découverts depuis la Nouvelle France jusqu'au Golfe Mexique les années* 1679, 80, 81, *et* 82, *par Jean Baptiste Louis Franquelin. l'an* 1684. *Paris.* Franquelin was a young engineer, who held the post of hydrographer to the King, at Quebec, in which Joliet succeeded him. Several of his maps are preserved, including one made in 1681, in which he lays down the course of the Mississippi, — the lower part from conjecture, — making it discharge itself into Mobile Bay. It appears from a letter of the governor, La Barre, that Franquelin was at Quebec in 1683, engaged on a map which was probably that of which the title is given above, though had La Barre known that it was to be called a map of the journeys of

his victim La Salle, he would have been more sparing of his praises. "He" (Franquelin), writes the governor, "is as skilful as any in France, but extremely poor and in need of a little aid from his Majesty as an Engineer; he is at work on a very correct map of the country, which I shall send you next year in his name; meanwhile, I shall support him with some little assistance." — *Colonial Documents of New York*, IX. 205.

The map is very elaborately executed, and is six feet long and four and a half wide. It exhibits the political divisions of the continent, as the French then understood them; that is to say, all the regions drained by streams flowing into the St. Lawrence and the Mississippi are claimed as belonging to France, and this vast domain is separated into two grand divisions, La Nouvelle France and La Louisiane. The boundary line of the former, New France, is drawn from the Penobscot to the southern extremity of Lake Champlain, and thence to the Mohawk, which it crosses a little above Schenectady, in order to make French subjects of the Mohawk Indians. Thence it passes by the sources of the Susquehanna and the Alleghany, along the southern shore of Lake Erie, across Southern Michigan, and by the head of Lake Michigan, whence it sweeps northwestward to the sources of the Mississippi. Louisiana includes the entire valley of the Mississippi and the Ohio, besides the whole of Texas. The Spanish province of Florida comprises the peninsula and the country east of the Bay of Mobile, drained by streams flowing into the Gulf; while Carolina, Virginia, and the other English provinces, form a narrow strip between the Alleghanies and the Atlantic.

The Mississippi is called "Missisipi, ou Rivière Colbert;" the Missouri, "Grande Rivière des Emissourittes, ou Missourits;" the Illinois, "Rivière des Ilinois, ou Macopins;" the Ohio, which La Salle had before called by its



second map, La Salle's colony appears in much diminished proportions, his Indian settlements having in good measure dispersed.

Two later maps of New France and Louisiana, both bearing Franquelin's name, are preserved in the Dépôt des Cartes de la Marine, as well as a number of smaller maps and sketches, also by him. They all have more or less of the features of the great map of 1684, which surpasses them all in interest and completeness.

The remarkable manuscript map of the Upper Mississippi by Le Sueur belongs to a period later than the close of this narrative.

These various maps, joined to contemporary documents, show that the Valley of the Mississippi received, at an early date, the several names of Manitoumie, Frontenacie, Colbertie, and La Louisiane. This last name, which it long retained, is due to La Salle. The first use of it which I have observed is in a conveyance of the Island of Belleisle, made by him to his lieutenant, La Forest, in 1679.

II.

THE ELDORADO OF MATHIEU SÂGEAN.

Father Hennepin had among his contemporaries two rivals in the fabrication of new discoveries. The first was the noted La Hontan, whose book, like his own, had a wide circulation and proved a great success. La Hontan had seen much, and portions of his story have a substantial value; but his account of his pretended voyage up the "Long River" is a sheer fabrication. His "Long River"

corresponds in position with the St. Peter, but it corresponds in nothing else; and the populous nations whom he found on it — the Eokoros, the Esanapes, and the Gnacsitares, no less than their neighbors the Mozeemlek and the Tahuglauk — are as real as the nations visited by Captain Gulliver. But La Hontan did not, like Hennepin, add slander and plagiarism to mendacity, or seek to appropriate to himself the credit of genuine discoveries made by others.

Mathieu Sâgean is a personage less known than Hennepin or La Hontan; for though he surpassed them both in fertility of invention, he was illiterate, and never made a book. In 1701, being then a soldier in a company of marines at Brest, he revealed a secret which he declared that he had locked within his breast for twenty years, having been unwilling to impart it to the Dutch and English, in whose service he had been during the whole period. His story was written down from his dictation, and sent to the minister Ponchartrain. It is preserved in the Bibliothèque Nationale, and in 1863 it was printed by Mr. Shea.

He was born, he declares, at La Chine in Canada, and engaged in the service of La Salle about twenty years before the revelation of his secret; that is, in 1681. Hence, he would have been, at the utmost, only fourteen years old, as La Chine did not exist before 1667. He was with La Salle at the building of Fort St. Louis of the Illinois, and was left here as one of a hundred men under command of Tonty. Tonty, it is to be observed, had but a small fraction of this number; and Sâgean describes the fort in a manner which shows that he never saw it. Being desirous of making some new discovery, he obtained leave from Tonty, and set out with eleven other Frenchmen and two Mohegan Indians. They ascended the Mississippi a hundred and fifty leagues, carried their canoes by a cataract, went forty leagues farther, and stopped a month to hunt.

While thus employed, they found another river, fourteen leagues distant, flowing south-southwest. They carried their canoes thither, meeting on the way many lions, leopards, and tigers, which did them no harm; then they embarked, paddled a hundred and fifty leagues farther, and found themselves in the midst of the great nation of the Acanibas, dwelling in many fortified towns, and governed by King Hagaren, who claimed descent from Montezuma. The King, like his subjects, was clothed with the skins of men. Nevertheless, he and they were civilized and polished in their manners. They worshipped certain frightful idols of gold in the royal palace. One of them represented the ancestor of their monarch armed with lance, bow, and quiver, and in the act of mounting his horse; while in his mouth he held a jewel as large as a goose's egg, which shone like fire, and which, in the opinion of Sâgean, was a carbuncle. Another of these images was that of a woman mounted on a golden unicorn, with a horn more than a fathom long. After passing, pursues the story, between these idols, which stand on platforms of gold, each thirty feet square, one enters a magnificent vestibule, conducting to the apartment of the King. At the four corners of this vestibule are stationed bands of music, which, to the taste of Sâgean, was of very poor quality. The palace is of vast extent, and the private apartment of the King is twenty-eight or thirty feet square; the walls, to the height of eighteen feet, being of bricks of solid gold, and the pavement of the same. Here the King dwells alone, served only by his wives, of whom he takes a new one every day. The Frenchmen alone had the privilege of entering, and were graciously received.

These people carry on a great trade in gold with a nation, believed by Sâgean to be the Japanese, as the journey to them lasts six months. He saw the departure of one of the

caravans, which consisted of more than three thousand oxen, laden with gold, and an equal number of horsemen, armed with lances, bows, and daggers. They receive iron and steel in exchange for their gold. The King has an army of a hundred thousand men, of whom three fourths are cavalry. They have golden trumpets, with which they make very indifferent music; and also golden drums, which, as well as the drummer, are carried on the backs of oxen. The troops are practised once a week in shooting at a target with arrows; and the King rewards the victor with one of his wives, or with some honorable employment.

These people are of a dark complexion and hideous to look upon, because their faces are made long and narrow by pressing their heads between two boards in infancy. The women, however, are as fair as in Europe; though, in common with the men, their ears are enormously large. All persons of distinction among the Acanibas wear their finger-nails very long. They are polygamists, and each man takes as many wives as he wants. They are of a joyous disposition, moderate drinkers, but great smokers. They entertained Sâgean and his followers during five months with the fat of the land; and any woman who refused a Frenchman was ordered to be killed. Six girls were put to death with daggers for this breach of hospitality. The King, being anxious to retain his visitors in his service, offered Sâgean one of his daughters, aged fourteen years, in marriage; and when he saw him resolved to depart, promised to keep her for him till he should return.

The climate is delightful, and summer reigns throughout the year. The plains are full of birds and animals of all kinds, among which are many parrots and monkeys, besides the wild cattle, with humps like camels, which these people use as beasts of burden.

King Hagaren would not let the Frenchmen go till they

had sworn by the sky, which is the customary oath of the Acanibas, that they would return in thirty-six moons, and bring him a supply of beads and other trinkets from Canada. As gold was to be had for the asking, each of the eleven Frenchmen took away with him sixty small bars, weighing about four pounds each. The King ordered two hundred horsemen to escort them, and carry the gold to their canoes; which they did, and then bade them farewell with terrific howlings, meant, doubtless, to do them honor.

After many adventures, wherein nearly all his companions came to a bloody end, Sâgean, and the few others who survived, had the ill luck to be captured by English pirates, at the mouth of the St. Lawrence. He spent many years among them in the East and West Indies, but would not reveal the secret of his Eldorado to these heretical foreigners.

Such was the story, which so far imposed on the credulity of the minister Ponchartrain as to persuade him that the matter was worth serious examination. Accordingly, Sâgean was sent to Louisiana, then in its earliest infancy as a French colony. Here he met various persons who had known him in Canada, who denied that he had ever been on the Mississippi, and contradicted his account of his parentage. Nevertheless, he held fast to his story, and declared that the gold mines of the Acanibas could be reached without difficulty by the river Missouri. But Sauvolle and Bienville, chiefs of the colony, were obstinate in their unbelief; and Sâgean and his King Hagaren lapsed alike into oblivion.

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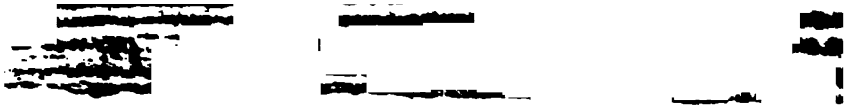

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